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ABSTRACT

This guide describes the school administrator's managerial role. It is designed to help readers gain additional insights into this role by explaining how to conduct a self-review of the strengths and weaknesses of educational-management-related policies and procedures in school districts. It begins with a discussion of a school administrators' multiple roles. Chapter 1 distinguishes between the equally important leadership and managerial roles of the educational administrator, whereas the remaining chapters focus on the managerial role and related tasks, which are often overlooked in educational administration education and literature. Chapter 2 describes the management model upon which the Effective School District Management Review Instrument (ESDMRI) is based, with special emphasis on managerial roles as they have been traditionally defined and the various forms of management scanning conducted by school managers. Chapter 3 discusses the process of self-review and provides a variety of methods using the ESDMRI. The next chapter provides a guide to the instrument, along with references to related materials for each item of the ESDMRI. The final chapter details the continuous process of management scanning, review, and change, and its importance to effective school district management. A copy of the ESDMRI appears in the appendix. (Contains approximately 210 references.) (RJM)

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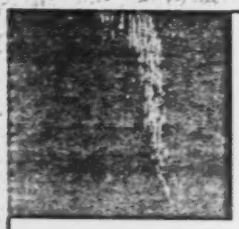

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Effective School District Management:

A Self-Review Instrument and Guide

Fred Dembowski with Carl D. Ekstrom

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Preface

School administrators must serve multiple roles in the daily conduct of their responsibilities, trying to respond to the demands of many constituents and to a variety of role expectations. First and foremost, all educational leaders must create a vision about and remain focused on instructional leadership. Without such a focus on its primary mission, a school district is unlikely to achieve its instructional goals and objectives. At the same time, school administrators must also pay attention to the "nuts and bolts" of managing large and complex enterprises. *Effective School District Management: A Self-Review Instrument and Guide* emphasizes the managerial role of the school administrator's work and helps readers gain additional insights into this role by explaining how to conduct a self-review of the strengths and weaknesses of educational management-related policies and procedures in school districts. Undertaking such a review on a periodic basis enables busy school administrators to be better prepared and to anticipate problem areas, freeing additional time to focus on the primary educational mission.

Effective School District Management: A Self-Review Instrument and Guide begins with a discussion of school administrators' multiple roles. Chapter I distinguishes between the equally important leadership and managerial roles of the educational administrator. The remaining chapters focus on the managerial role and related tasks, which are often overlooked in educational administration education and literature. Chapter II describes the management model upon which the Effective School District Management Review Instrument (ESDMRI) is based, with special emphasis on the various forms of management scanning conducted by school managers. Chapter III discusses the process of self-review and provides a variety of methods using the ESDMRI. Chapter IV provides the ESDMRI, along with references to related materials for each item of the instrument. The final chapter discusses the continuous process of management scanning, review, and change, and its importance to effective school district management. We have also included a copy of the ESDMRI itself in Appendix A for easy copying and use by groups.

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CHAPTER 1

The Managerial Role of School Administrators

While finishing her morning cup of coffee before leaving home for the office, Dr. Harriet Jones, a newly appointed superintendent of a large suburban school district, notices a brief news item in the newspaper. The article mentions the arrest the night before of Thomas Upeeking on charges of trafficking in child pornography. On the way to work, Jones suddenly recalls that one of the teachers in the Southside Elementary School is a Mr. Upeeking.

Jones' drive to the office is filled with thoughts of the immediate challenges that will result from this news during the day ahead. There will be inquiries from the newspaper and the members of the school board. She will need to confer with key administrative staff, including the principal of Southside Elementary School, concerning district policy and possible action. There will be the need to protect both the school district and the rights of the employee. And all of this will have to be fit into an already full agenda that includes a scheduled monthly meeting with representatives from the unified district Parent-Teacher Association to discuss anticipated changes in the district curriculum, a meeting with an architectural team to discuss preliminary plans for a new middle school, and discussions with the assistant superintendent for administration about the status of the preparation of the annual budget, which must be submitted to the school board in two weeks. And on top of all of that, Jones must review the results of the monthly district financial reports, the report on enrollment projections, and bids for next year's food service contract.

Anyone familiar with the demands placed on today's school superintendent can sympathize with the pressures facing Jones. School administrators must constantly juggle multiple demands with many situations not of their own making. And many of these demands are contradictory or impossible to resolve to everyone's satisfaction. For instance, how do you resolve the demand by local taxpayers for property tax relief with the need to raise adequate financial resources to provide a high-quality educational program? How do you resolve the pressures to purchase from local firms with the more favorable prices and services from vendors outside the district? How do you achieve parents' desire for quick transportation to school for their children when the state highway department closes a bridge for repairs, creating a lengthy detour and long travel time?

Anyone involved in school administration also recognizes that not all of the issues of leadership and management are morally inspiring and compelling. While it is exciting to think of the noble roles of educational innovation and the inspiring educational leadership performed by school administrators, many of the roles related to school administration involve responding to unanticipated emergencies ("putting out fires") or simply holding together the day-to-day functioning of the school district. Part of the process of handling this juggling act for all new and even seasoned administrators is to

recognize the range of roles they must play and learn how to analyze the district's effectiveness with related tasks.

Leader and Manager Roles

Leader roles are those activities central to educational direction (*mission*) that involve a broad range of audiences (*stakeholders*).[1] In the leadership role, the school administrator must provide vision and stimulus for educational policy and process development and serve as a role model for all other educational professionals in the district.

Manager roles, on the other hand, are those that involve the supervision of the day-to-day operations associated with running a complex organization such as a school district. In these roles, the school administrator confronts a wide range of issues involving administrative and support-related functions. Many of these activities require special knowledge and expertise.

Clearly, the leader roles in education are typically assigned greater status and command more attention from school administrators than the management roles.[2] No topic is covered as extensively in the educational administration literature.[3] The leadership role is also broadly recognized by new school administrators, most of whom come from the professional teaching ranks where they have been well socialized to a common educational ethos and are used to paying attention to leaders.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN LEADER AND MANAGER roles can also be applied to school administrators in positions other than the superintendency. The following figure summarizes this distinction for superintendents and principals.

LEADER AND MANAGER ROLES

	Leader Roles	Manager Roles
SUPERINTENDENT	Community Leader, Chief Professional (Role Model)	Chief Executive Officer/Manager
PRINCIPAL	Instructional Leader	Facility Manager

[1] For the purposes of this text, both leader and manager roles are considered administrative roles. For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Dembowski 1997.

[2] At an October 1998 workshop at the ASBO International Conference in San Antonio, TX, school business officials were asked to rank the terms *Leader* and *Manager* on a scale of 1-10, using their own criteria and perceptions, where 1 is "low" and 10 is "high." The mean values of the 66 participants were Leader – 9.2, Manager – 8.8. This is not an unusual result. The authors have encountered similar findings many times in their educational and public administration classes.

[3] Conversely, virtually no attention is paid to the reciprocal of leadership—followership. See Chaleff, I. (1994). *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up To and For Our Leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publisher; and Kelley, R. (1991). *The Power of Followership*. New York, NY: Doubleday Currency.

Leader roles include all of those essential relationships and interactions that involve creating vision and serving as a role model (Kahn 1964). In this context, the superintendent is a public figure and educational policy leader interacting with the elected board as the policy body, staff as providers, parents and students as customers, and the public as investors. Given the appointive nature of the superintendent role, these leadership-related administrative roles require special statesmanship skills as well as an array of basic executive skills. It is likely that because of the high visibility given to these roles, many superintendents are selected because they evidence a good command of these functions.

> **Superintendent's Maxim:**
> *You get hired for being a good leader; you get fired for being a poor manager.*
> Frederick Dembowski 1998

What is more difficult to identify in practice, and during the employment selection process, are the various roles and skills required for successful management of a school district. The superintendent as manager relates to those functions mainly *internal* to the school district and crucial for the day-to-day functioning of the district as an organization. In this role, rather than exercising community leadership and statesmanship skills, the superintendent must serve as the organization's chief administrator/executive officer/manager. Therefore, it is essential that the superintendent provide supervision and foster an understanding of an array of managerial approaches and tools related to the effective functioning of various managerial sub-systems.

Complete mastery of all leadership and management roles is the ideal for school administrators. Individuals, however, each with their unique mix of personal training and professional experiences, often favor one of these roles and have limited tolerance for the other role. Accordingly, superintendents often attempt to delegate a major portion of their undesired role to associates. For instance, the superintendent who favors the leader or public role will frequently delegate management duties to an assistant superintendent for administration, to a business manager, or to someone in a related position. But effective school administrators must strive for balance, achieving mastery of both roles and paying diligent attention to both roles.

Public administration scholar George Frederickson developed a series of comparative attributes to summarize the distinctions between the dominant values and attributes of leaders and managers, referring to governmental administration and community policymaking roles. Figure 1.1 (see p. 4) displays Frederickson's views regarding these distinctions, which point to a number of critical differences between manager and leader roles. Essentially, leader roles are more people-oriented while manager roles are more process-oriented. The goal for school leaders is to effectively solve problems given the environmental context and constraints.

As stated, while leader and manager roles are viewed as equally important, leader roles have been treated well elsewhere (see Hoyle, English, and Steffy 1998; and Schwahn and Spady 1998). Therefore, it is necessary to focus more attention on the importance of managerial functions in school administration.

In the next chapter, we briefly elaborate the managerial roles as they have been traditionally defined and more carefully focus on the various types of management reviews administrators conduct.

Figure 1.1 Values and Attributes in Role Distinctions

	Managers	**Leaders**
Value	Efficiency Equity Order	Civil Discourse Trust Responsibility
Rule	Laws Regulations	Norms of Civility Reciprocity
Process	To Represent To Debate Rational Planning	To Participate To Educate Improving in a Generally Agreed-Upon Direction
Game	Winners and Losers Compromise	Consensus Mediation
Symbol	Office Authority	Action Example
Aspiration	To Supervise To Direct	To Belong To Connect
Currency	Revenues Power	Time Energy
Direction	Vertical	Horizontal

CHAPTER 2

Effective School District Management

A general model of school district managerial effectiveness provides the framework around which our Effective School District Management Review Instrument (ESDMRI) is built. This model is based on four basic concepts: mission-based administration, the managerial cycle, management sub-systems, and administrative scans (reviews).

Mission-Based Administration

The search for excellence in any organization begins with purpose or mission (Peters and Waterman 1982). The organization without a clearly defined mission "rudder" is likely to flounder and move randomly rather than in a purposeful direction. Left unchecked, this leads to conditions in which the only reason for an organization to exist is some form of self-prescription fed by inertia.

Admittedly, many organizations, including educational organizations, disregard this essential fact and lack a clear mission. But, fortunately, in education it is virtually impossible to totally avoid consideration of a school district's basic instructional mission. Figure 2.1 provides a graphic depiction of the forces that shape a district's mission. These forces include: the *vision* stimulated by leaders and shared by educators, *past practices, demands from various stakeholders* (public, staff, parents, and students), and *external policies.* This latter element is especially critical in the case of education where the federal government and state departments of education establish many policies (public laws or regulations).

Vision

In school district administration, mission development is a complex process involving many key players or stakeholders. Few of the factors influencing a school district's mission are within the school administrator's control. While school administrators have substantial influence on shaping mission, they must be aware of the limits on their ability to dictate vision and unilaterally shift mission focus. A frequent problem faced by school districts is the upheaval caused by a new superintendent who tries to change too many things too fast. The ESDMRI serves as an ideal tool to guide a new superintendent in becoming familiar with the operational effectiveness of a district's management sub-systems.

Figure 2.1 Mission Influences

Past Practices

In any organization, past practices influence current action. Ask staff members why they perform tasks the way they do and the likely answer is "Because that is the way we have always done it." Organizational inertia, combined with fear of change, causes many organizations to place a high value on preservation of the status quo. Schools, for instance, are tradition bound in practices concerning school calendar and daily scheduling. Elwood Cubberley designed the basic school calendar and ordering of the school day used by most school districts today in 1906!

Demands

Both internal and external demands affect the school district's mission. Demographic changes, for example, affect a district's mission. Also, students and parents often demand specific programs and curricula that influence the mission. For example, parents of gifted and talented as well as special needs children want the district to focus on providing programs geared to their children's needs and abilities.

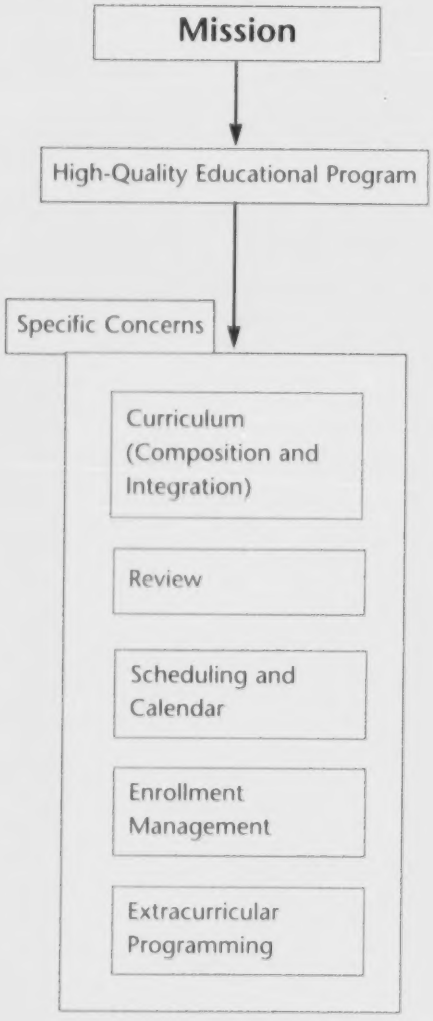
External Policies

And finally, for most local school systems, external policies, especially those enacted at the federal and state government levels, influence mission development. Examples include national standards for math and science, and the use of a uniform accounting system.

However, despite attempts to establish some uniform national policies in education, public schools remain state institutions. Some general similarities exist on the national level but discrete policy distinctions and unique characteristics result from state-level influence.

The organizational structure and functions of a school district reflect its mission. Every school district's primary mission is to provide high-quality educational services (see Figure 2.2). This basic mission means that decisions must be made about curriculum, individual and program review, scheduling and the calendar, enrollment management, extracurricular activities, and other instructional issues. These mission-related issues require rigorous attention and are fundamental to all school district activities.

Figure 2.2 Mission-Driven Linkages



The Managerial Cycle

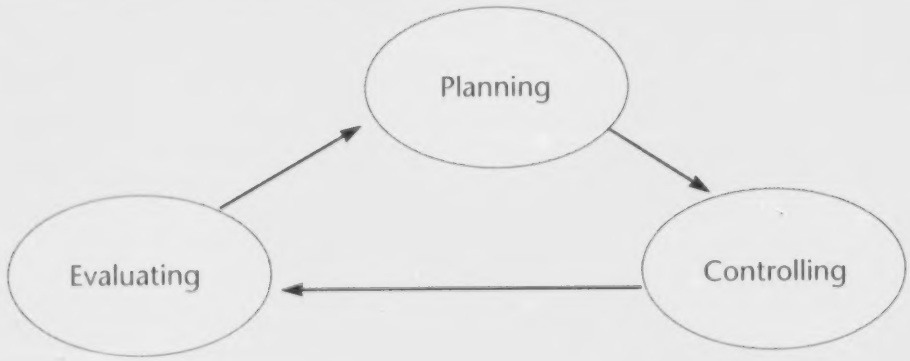
Administrative or managerial functions have been classified many ways over the years. Classical management theorists viewed managerial functions as consisting of distinct activities. Henri Fayol (1949) argued that there are five primary management tasks: planning, organizing, leading, controlling, and evaluating. [1] Luther Gulick (1937), in a classical statement on management, coined the term PODSCORB, which stands for Planning, Organizing, Directing, Staffing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting, to describe the functions of management.

Contemporary views describe management more as a series of linked activities or as a cycle than a set of distinct actions.[2] Kaufmann et al. (1986) divide the managerial cycle into three linked components—planning, controlling, and evaluating—which are sequential and repetitive (see Figure 2.3).

Planning

The managerial cycle begins with the planning activity. In this phase of management activity, intended directions and organizational objectives are established. For many school districts, planning activities include annual budget making and embrace a strategic planning process. Typically, the planning process provides the requisite information to inform decision making.

Figure 2.3 The Managerial Cycle



Planning: information collection, analysis, forecasting, and proposing courses of action leading to decision making

Controlling: the process of implementing a program and the associated methods of increasing the alignment of actions with intentions

Evaluating: the process of determining the results of program action in order to use this information to inform future action, continuing action, revised action, or abandoning an activity

[1] School administrators typically do not value all of the management functions equally. The group of school business officials cited in footnote 2 in Chapter 1 gave the following rating (1 = "low" to 10 = "high") to these classical management tasks: Planning - 9.2, Organizing - 8.7, Leading - 9.4, Controlling - 6.2, Evaluating - 8.5 This unevenness is due partly to a lack of management-related training in professional development programs. Most university school administration programs overemphasize leadership and underemphasize the control and evaluation functions of management.

[2] For a comprehensive discussion of contemporary management, see Boone and Kurtz 1996 and Szilagyi 1988.

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Control

The control activities involve carrying out established policies informed by planning activities and enacted through the decision-making process. In this phase of administrative activity, attention is given to establishing control systems to record and report activity, compare results against intentions, and detect deviations. In many organizations, administrative intervention only occurs when control systems indicate that deviations or exceptions exist (management by exception). The classical rendering of administrative or management control is found in Figure 2.4.

Evaluation

An evaluation function is required to bring closure to this managerial cycle and to provide for accountability. Program efficiency and effectiveness is determined in the evaluation function. Evaluation is essential for the functioning of performance-oriented control systems. In a comprehensive management cycle, the results of evaluation inform subsequent planning, confirming effective courses of action and suggesting areas for revision. Thus, the cycle of managerial functions is self-perpetuating.

Management Sub-Systems

Fayol (1946) produced the classical delineation of the management sub-systems in the private sector. Gilbert Hentschke (1975) was an early leader in focusing on management operations in education. Hentschke identified five systems that provide a focus for educational management—financial, logistical, allocations, planning, and information (see Figure 2.5 on page 9).

We have augmented and expanded Hentschke's management sub-functions for use in the ESDMRI. Figure 2.6 (on page 9) summarizes our revised view of management sub-systems.

Figure 2.4 Classical Management Control Model

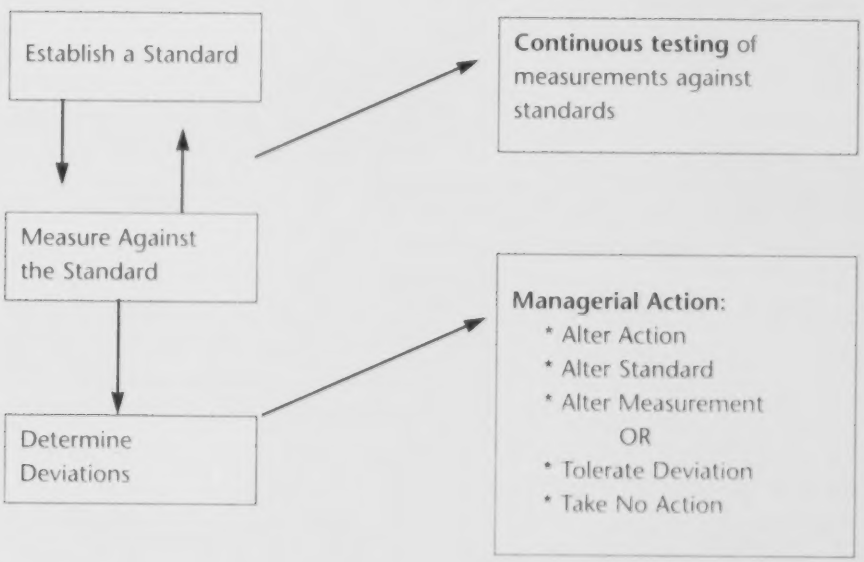


Figure 2.5 Hentschke's Management Systems

Financial	Dealing primarily with financial data, such as accounting, cash management, and risk management
Logistical	Supporting instructional programs, including materials management, transportation, food service, and maintenance
Allocation	Allocating scarce resources to achieve educational objectives, as in budgeting
Planning	Undertaking quantitative forecasting and planning, including enrollment and expected revenue forecasting
Information	Focusing on management's role in the development, operation, and evaluation of information systems

Figure 2.6 Management Sub-Systems

Operating Policy/Governance—activities related to the maintenance of basic policy development and organizational governance

Human Resources—activities related to recruiting, staffing, training, evaluating, and otherwise maintaining the personnel required to staff the district

Financing—activities related to budgeting and accounting (recording, reporting, and auditing)

Infrastructure—activities related to inventorying, maintaining, and upgrading the district's capital assets

Risk and Liability —controlling, maximizing, and providing for student and staff safety and limiting/managing catastrophic events

Technology—planning, developing, maintaining, and controlling the technology capacity to support educational and administrative functions

Communications and Information—planning, developing, maintaining, and controlling the various communications channels, managerial information, and communications methods used by the district

Purchasing—determining specifications and obtaining necessary supplies and equipment

Counseling/Health Services—educating and providing basic counseling and health-related services to students

Selected Support (Auxiliary) Activities—various functions commonly found in schools that support instructional delivery, including:

- **Transportation**: transporting students
- Food Service: feeding students and providing nutrition information
- **Operations and Maintenance**: basic cleaning and maintenance of buildings and ground
- **Security Services**: providing for the safety of students, staff, and facilities

Operating Policy/Governance

Every organization must have a set of policies. In the case of public and nonprofit entities, the governance sub-system is usually more complex than with private entities because typically more political interests, constituencies, and stakeholders are involved. This is especially true with public school districts because every resident within the geographic boundaries of the district has a proprietary interest in the operation of the district. In addition, there are specific groups, such as parents and students, who are also consumers. State governments, through state departments of education, also have particular interests because all states offer some financial assistance to schools.

The obvious challenge related to the operating policy/governance sub-system is to establish and maintain effective communications channels capable of involving all stakeholders in the school system's policy and governance processes. The basic operational concern of those managing this sub-system is to ensure that all policy and governance processes are effective and suitable to the needs of the district.

Human Resources

This sub-system deals with the most valuable resource of the school district—teachers, administrators, and support employees. The human resources sub-system requires that the school administrator protect the rights of the district employees while holding employees accountable for individual professional actions. Among the chief concerns in human resources are the planning for and recruitment of the best possible staff, the appropriate placement of personnel, evaluation of performance effectiveness, and the facilitation of professional growth and skills.

Financing

The financing sub-system is often viewed as a very specialized administrative area requiring the special skills of a business manager or financially trained expert. While many financial operations require special skills, all school administrators should have a solid understanding of fundamental financial processes and skills. These processes and skills include budgeting, accounting, and auditing.

Infrastructure

No school system can operate without investment in the physical resources of the district—the buildings, furnishings, equipment, and grounds that comprise the infrastructure used to deliver educational services. The key issues of infrastructure relate to the planning for, maintenance of, and accomplishment of the educational mission. Planning and control skills are crucial in this sub-system.

Risk and Liability

Given today's litigious society and the need to protect the safety and well being of students and staff, special concern must be given to the identification of potential areas of risk involving unsafe operational practices or situations. The primary goal of this sub-system is to make people safety conscious, minimize exposure of students and staff to potential risk, and provide contingencies for dealing with unexpected compromises of safety.

Technology

The constant emergence of new technologies poses special challenges for school management. The continuing trade-off is between ensuring that students and staff receive appropriate exposure and access to new technology that supports and contributes directly to all facets of the educational mission and the great costs associated with keeping pace with leading-edge technology.

Communications and Information

Partially linked to the technology sub-system is that of communications and information. This sub-system relates to the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate equipment and processes that support the instructional and administrative operations of the district. From a management perspective, the communications and information sub-system also concerns the maintenance and application of communications policies and practices, as well as the provision and maintenance of appropriate information or databases for decision-support systems.

Purchasing

Typically, school districts operate within well-defined statutory regulations governing the acquisition of goods and supplies required to deliver educational services. Effective school administration, however, requires more than slavish adherence to rules and regulations. It requires an appreciation for the complexities and trade-offs involved in the efficient and effective management of any purchasing process. The goal is for appropriate supplies to be available when and where needed at the lowest possible cost and with a minimum of loss, which involves the establishment of an efficient and effective purchasing, warehousing, and distribution system.

Counseling/Health Services

These specialized services should be viewed as integral to the instructional process. Public health services have been important support services in school systems for quite some time. Counseling, on the other hand, has assumed greater importance in schools in the past 30 years with the identification of more children with debilitating learning and emotional difficulties. These services are included in the ESDMRI because of the special managerial challenges associated with them.

Selected Support Services

Individual school districts have differing approaches to the provision and maintenance of basic support services. These support services, sometimes referred to as auxiliary services, include transportation, food service, operations and maintenance, and security services. Each of these activities constitutes a crucial support function for the educational process and involves basic business or management concerns replicated in areas other than education.

Administrative Scans (Reviews)

As Cameron and Whetten (1983) have stated, "There is not one universal model of organizational effectiveness" primarily because there is not one universal model for organizations. Cameron and Whetten propose that an organization can be reviewed from the perspectives of society (external), the executive organizational level, the departmental level, and the individual level, and that all four reviews of the same organization will be different and correct. For this reason, it is important for any comprehensive organizational effectiveness review to consider all four of these perspectives. The ESDMRI does so by including various stakeholders in the review process.

Szilagyi (1988) posited a more detailed model of reviewing the effectiveness of managerial performance. He stated that any managerial performance review must fulfill five requirements:

- Managerial performance must be evaluated using multiple criteria,
- The levels of analysis should range from individual to societal,

- The focus of analysis should concern all of the *maintenance, improvement,* and *development* goals and functions of the organization [italics added],
- Time frames should range from short-term to very long-term, and
- Measurements should be both quantitative/objective and qualitative/subjective.

The ESDMRI addresses all of Szilagyi's criteria by examining all management functions in terms of three operational or performance-related goals: maintenance, improvement, and development. The scope of these management goals is as follows.

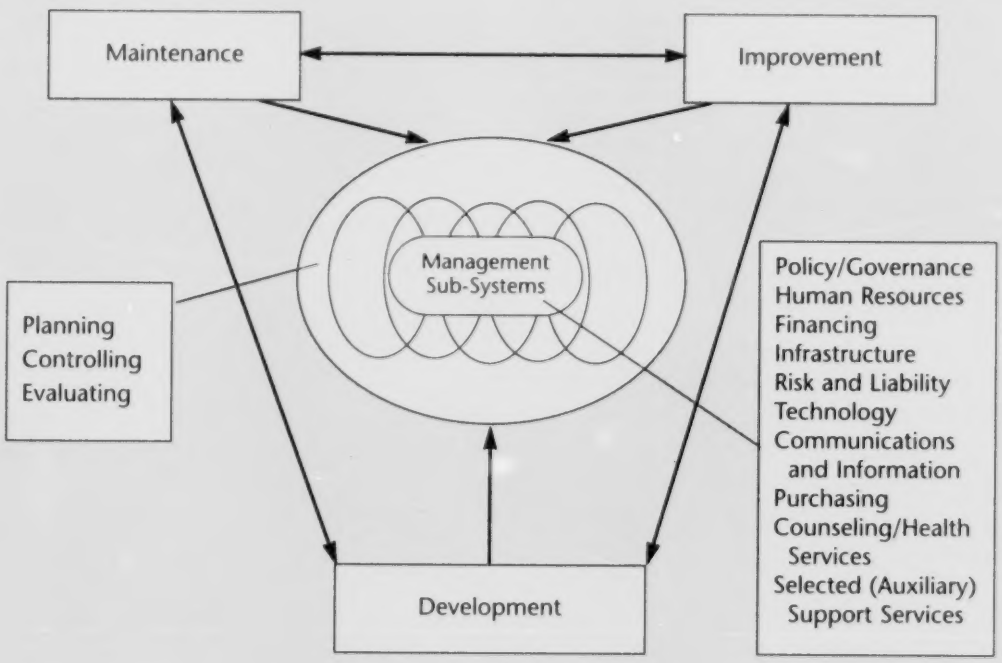
Maintenance—the continuation of the basic organizational infrastructure such as the mission statement, objectives, standing plans, policy, rules, regulations, procedures/process, budgets, programmatic goals and plans, and anything else required for the effective day-to-day operations of the organization's programs.

Improvement—the continuing review of operational effectiveness during maintenance activities to establish continuous improvement strategies. This review leads to action plans for engaging in improvement activity and involves review of the operational effectiveness of all maintenance management functions, including standing plans, policies, procedures, and programs.

Development—consideration of changes required to meet future challenges and projected states. This goal entails the establishment of a planning and development process designed to move the organization into the future.

The ESDMRI helps users directly examine all of the maintenance, improvement, and

Figure 2.7 General Model of School District Management



development goals and functions of an organization by asking those using the instrument to consider activities related to these goals for each management sub-system. Figure 2.7 (on page 12) depicts the general model upon which the ESDMRI is based.

Conclusions

In summary, the ESDMRI is based on the belief that in order for a school system to operate effectively, its management sub-systems must be reviewed with regard to their ability to ensure maintenance, improvement, and development. In order to ensure that the necessary perspectives are represented, representative stakeholders from society, the organizational level, the departmental level, and the individual level must be included in the review process. Thus, the review process should be conducted as a team effort with the ESDMRI serving as a guide for discussion that ultimately leads to consensus about a school district's effectiveness related to management tasks.

■

The educational manager can no longer satisfactorily perform his duties by operating a system; he must also continually analyze and, when necessary, modify it.

Gilbert Hentschke 1975

■

CHAPTER 3

Conducting a Management Self-Review

This chapter explains how a school district should prepare for and conduct a management review using the **Effective School District Management Review Instrument (ESDMRI)**. This instrument is designed as a guide for group discussion leading to consensus. The actual ESDMRI is found in Appendix A (see page 93) as a stand-alone instrument that can be duplicated for use by district teams. A complete explanation of each of its individual questions is found in Chapter 4. We suggest that you take a moment to look over the instrument before reading this chapter.

The Self-Review Process

1. What is self-review?
2. What are some recommended approaches to using self-review, individually or as a management team?
3. How might a school administrator use the results?

The process of self-review is not a new concept.[1] It has come into extensive use in management practice and has been used frequently in educational organizations. We prefer the term *review*, instead of the *assessment* or *evaluation*, because the latter two terms are frequently used in the educational profession and have commonly accepted meanings. Typically these two terms imply a focus on outcomes rather than process. They also imply heavy reliance on quantitative, rather than qualitative, measures. As the title implies, The Effective School District Management Review Instrument (ESDMRI) focuses on the management process, not outcomes, of the school district. Specifically, the ESDMRI focuses on answering the questions "Are we conducting a particular management process?" and "Is that particular management process being conducted to our satisfaction?" The ESDMRI does not require the measurement of the outcomes of management processes, or the determination of whether the outcomes meet a standard or benchmark because there is no universally agreed-upon taxonomy of management outcomes for school administrators. However, the delineation of management processes in the ESDMRI can serve as the first step in the development of such a taxonomy for school districts.

It is important to remember that the level of analysis and focus of the ESDMRI is the organization, not the individual. Unlike some self-review processes in education that rely on the use of outside experts or external evaluators, the ESDMRI process is intended to be internal to the organization and conducted by organizational stakeholders. The

[1] Webster, W.E. (1988) *The High-Performing Educational Manager*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation uses both checklists and analysis forms to aid the educational administrator in reviewing the level of performance. The Drucker Foundation, in cooperation with Jossey-Bass Publishers (1998), has developed and published an organizational self-review tool that focuses on five questions: (1) What is our mission? (2) Who are our customers? (3) What does the customer value? (4) What are our results? (5) What is our plan?

actual self-review process can be conducted by a single individual in the organization, but in order for the ESDMRI to better serve as an impetus for management change, *it is highly recommended that the entire district management team, augmented with key stakeholders, be involved in the review process.* The ESDMRI should be used as a basis for discussion of each item; the goal of the discussion is to come to consensus regarding each item's ranking. As noted in Chapter 2, we also recommend a collaborative approach to review that includes the societal, organizational, departmental, and individual perspectives. Therefore, the management team should be augmented with representative stakeholders from these constituencies.

The process of self-review implies a measure of subjective evaluation. While individuals are often their worst critics, a fear of uncovering unwelcome truths may also lead to a distortion of the results of any review. To counter this tendency, this self-review process needs to be undertaken with the clear understanding that it is a collective undertaking, not an individual evaluation. Accountability of results should not be an issue because the review process focuses on process, not outcomes. Thus, the ESDMRI process constitutes a *formative*, rather than a *summative*, review and should be undertaken as a learning process. Indeed, review participants are likely to consider the review process itself equally or even more important than the results of the process.

Uses of the Self-Review Process

The use of the ESDMRI facilitates the identification of areas of managerial weakness. In this review process, three potential areas for action are identified (see p. 17):

- Those management processes that are lacking and need to be developed and institutionalized,
- Those processes that need to be improved, and
- Those processes functioning at an exemplary level that participants determine need less emphasis.

Conducting a Self-Review

The ESDMRI does not introduce questions that have never been considered in the school district context. Its primary value is in organizing these issues in a conceptual framework that is both comprehensive and focused on the management aspects of school administration. For this reason, it is important throughout the management review process to involve multiple points of view as well as multiple management scans to facilitate the effective maintenance of existing activity, to initiate actions for improving activities, and to consider new concepts, issues, and programs to be developed.

Not every district will approach the management review process in a uniform manner; nor should they. The value of a tool like the ESDMRI is that it can be tailored to meet individual circumstances. At the same time, there are recommended approaches, which include the following steps.

1. Organizing and Educating
2. Conducting a Review Session
3. Analyzing Results
4. Determining a Change Strategy
5. Implementing Change

Organizing and Educating. The first step in any management review process is to educate the review team about management tasks and functions, and to develop the strategy that will be followed during the process itself. This means assembling the team members who will be involved and developing a timetable, as well as giving full consideration to how the information resulting from the review will be used.

Essentially, this first step is concerned with preparing the way for analysis. It corre-

Considerations in Selecting Ratings

Although the rating scale used in the review instrument is based on a 4-point Likert-type scale, where "0" is "low" and "3" is "high," in practice, the reviewers should realize that there are **seven** possible responses for each item in the review instrument:

A "0" can indicate one of the three possible conditions:

- Our district does not conduct this activity, and we should,
- Our district does not conduct this activity, and that is as it should be, or
- The process in this particular item does not pertain to our school district.

A "1" indicates a belief that the district is conducting this activity poorly and should take action to improve.

A "2" indicates a belief that the district is conducting this activity and is satisfied with its present level of performance.

A "3" can indicate two possible conditions:

- Our district is conducting this activity well and wants to maintain the present level of excellence, or
- Our district is conducting this activity well, but should, in fact, reduce the level of resources devoted to it.

This last response requires some explanation. To achieve excellence usually implies that a high level of resources are being expended in the conduct of an activity. If the activity is not central to the mission of the district, perhaps too many resources are being expended, and these resources should be reallocated. This concept is known as "Satisficing."[3] Herbert Simon won the Nobel Prize in Economics for his work on this.

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Not Everthing Worth Doing Is Necessarily Worth Doing Exceptionally Well !!

Frederick L. Dembowski

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In the process of discussing the items in the ESDMRI, participants should also consider each item's relative centrality to the district's mission and objectives. This information will be needed later when evaluating the results of the review.

[3] Simon, H. A. (1997) *Administrative Behavior.* 4th ed. New York, NY: The Free Press, 118.

sponds to the first step in Kurt Lewin's classic model of organizational change,[2] which depends on a three-stage attitudinal change process—unfreezing, moving, refreezing. In this first step of the self-review process, the "unfreezing" involves creating a shift in attitudes about change. There may be a need to break down the persistent organizational attitude that "we have always done things this way and therefore shouldn't change." A major part of this "unfreezing" requires that the school administrator reach out to various groups and seek their active involvement.

The process of organizing and educating also means empowering educational colleagues. Because there are no guarantees that the process will be successful, pursuing the process also means being tolerant of the possibility of failure. It must be clearly recognized that individual educational settings and individual administrator predispositions may not tolerate these conditions, preferring caution and resistance to the involvement of others. While the management self-review process can be undertaken with productive results without this broad-based involvement, evidence strongly suggests that without the societal (district and community), organizational (top level management), departmental (individual units) and individual (individual organization staff and professionals) perspectives represented in the deliberative process, substantial opportunities for organizational change are lost. Keep in mind that it is possible to narrow the number of persons involved in making decisions based on the review results provided there is broad-based input during the deliberation process.

Conducting a Review Session. The review process should be conducted at a time and in a place removed from daily distractions, ideally a weekend or summer retreat. Someone needs to be designated in advance of each session to serve as recorder and to draft a summary report.

Each of the items in the ESDMRI is intended to serve as the starting point for a comprehensive discussion of that item. In Chapter IV, sample discussion questions for many items in the instrument are listed. However, these questions are not intended to be a comprehensive listing, and should be augmented generously with questions developed by review participants pertinent to the situation faced by the individual district. Consensus should be reached regarding each item's ranking.

Those with supervisory responsibility for various component parts of the self-review analysis (management sub-systems) might wish to engage in some careful analysis of the individual items in the ESDMRI with their respective staffs in advance of the review session.

Reviewing Results. The systematic process of reviewing the results from the review session(s) constitutes the beginning of Lewin's "moving" stage. As soon as possible after the final review session, the summary report and review results should be conveyed to all participants for comment. A follow-up session should be planned and any revisions to the review report should be made at that time. In this review session, a change strategy committee can be selected to work out the details of next steps and to prioritize those areas identified as requiring attention.

This activity is primarily concerned with the identification of areas of managerial strengths and weaknesses. Based on this analysis, a general perspective of areas of managerial concern and delineation of priorities is determined. In this evaluation of review results, the issues should be separated into four categories: (1) those items deemed not applicable, (2) those items absent or with weaknesses and requiring attention, (3) those items considered either adequate or exemplary and not requiring priority attention other than maintenance, and (4) those exem-

[2] Lewin, K. (1938). *The Conceptual Representation and the Measure of Psychological Forces.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press; Lewin, K. (1951). *Field Theory in Social Science.* New York: Harper and Row.

plary areas that require less emphasis. Once these actions items are identified, a priority for action should be assigned to each. This general process of assigning priorities sets the stage for the more deliberative process of mapping change action steps.

Determining a Change Strategy. Once the results of the review have been determined, a change strategy committee should be formed. This committee plays a major role in the review process. It is the change strategy committee's responsibility to develop potential action steps in line with the priorities established by the review committee. On those high-priority items where change is warranted, the committee, in concert with as many stakeholders as possible, should develop a change strategy plan with detailed actions steps and a specific timetable for achieving results. This plan needs to be broadly distributed so that all those concerned or affected are informed of the impending changes and the timing of these changes.

This committee is likely to find the use of force-field analysis[4] valuable. Force-field analysis calls for the identification of a *desired future state.* The analysis also calls for identification of *restraining forces* or roadblocks to movement to the desired state, as well as *facilitating forces.* Revelations that come from this analysis provide change agents with important information for plotting a productive course for change.

Implementing Change. A review is of no value to an organization unless the results are used to initiate change. The administrator who has provided leadership to the entire management self-review process must remain the key individual to guide and track the change strategy. Periodic progress reports and amendments necessitated by subsequent findings should be broadly disseminated.

Lewin's "refreezing" takes place with the development and implementation of change strategies. The locus of organizational change (top-down or bottom-up) depends on the particular organization value placed on four factors: distribution of power, participation, speed, and uniformity. For instance, if shared power and participation are highly valued, bottom-up approaches will be favored. Conversely, if speed of change and uniformity are highly valued, top-down approaches will be favored. Much of the empirical evidence on organizational change does, however, point to the value of an identifiable "champion" of change as an essential ingredient (Behn 1991). The active involvement and support of the superintendent for this review and change process is essential.

Much of the change expected in this implementation stage relies on the application of innovation. The process of innovation means encouraging new ideas to occur and fostering an organizational culture that values and rewards inquiry and innovation. The first step in developing an organization open to innovation is to recognize that all innovation does not arise at a single point in the organization. Another major step is to determine the degree to which failure is tolerated. Not every innovation will succeed. Any organization that wants to improve must be willing to tol-

[4] For more information about force-field analysis, see Lewin, K. (1951). *Field Theory in Social Science.* New York, NY: Harper and Row; or any good management text.

erate failure. If failure is penalized, individuals will seek to remain on safe ground and avoid taking risks and being innovative. Tolerance of failure is extremely difficult in a public sector setting as political forces are biased in the direction of emphasizing successful action and eschewing failure. It is likely, then, that some school districts or school administrators will be unwilling, or perhaps unable, to pursue the process of managerial self-review and change proposed here. It should, however, be the goal for all districts and administrators because without such analysis and change, schools will become stagnant and increasingly less effective over time.

This change process depends on a spirit of shared responsibility, openness to ideas, involvement and collaboration of all key stakeholders, and a willingness to challenge conventional wisdom by changing the "status quo." The use of the ESDMRI will facilitate this change process by providing direction for inquiry. The results of the review will allow school administrators to concentrate on high-priority areas that will result in large payoffs in terms of school district efficiency and effectiveness.

CHAPTER 4

A Guide to The Effective School District Management Review Instrument

What follows is a detailed description of each item in the ESDMRI, as well as citations for additional sources of information related to each item. Note that in the instrument, the three administrative functions (Planning, Controlling, and Evaluating) are not dealt with separately. Instead, each section contains issues related to these primary functions in the managerial cycle, and the questions are grouped by management sub-systems and management scans (maintenance, improvement, and development).

The explanations provided here are not intended to provide the "one best way" to explore the item, but rather to suggest points that merit consideration by effective school administrators and other stakeholders. One of the strengths of the ESDMRI is that it allows users to tailor their exploration to their district to maximize the value of the information gathered.

Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	I.A OPERATING POLICY/GOVERNANCE – MAINTENANCE
1	**How appropriate is the district mission statement?**

A mission statement is a written statement of institutional purpose; it reflects the school districts' official purpose.

Questions related to the mission statement include: Does it express the values of the educational community? Does it provide direction and influence important school decisions? Is the district's mission statement clear and easily understood? Is it reviewed regularly? Does it have both an immediate and long-range focus? Is the statement readily available and used by the district in policy making?

Resources:

Graham, J.W. and W.C. Havlik. (1994). *Mission Statements: A Guide to the Corporate and Nonprofit Sectors.* New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Leithwood, K. and R. Aitken. (1995). *Making Schools Smarter: A System for Monitoring School and District Progress.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Thornton, S.A. and B. Spiesberger. (1994). *Transforming Schools: Finding Success for Students at Risk Through Systemic Change.* Sacramento, CA: California State Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 383 156)

2 **Are board policies appropriate, written, and up-to-date?**

A board policy is a statement of principle, adopted by the elected school district policy body. This statement serves as guideline or rule for decision making and action in a given area. Maintaining a written policy manual is a useful, systematic way to organize policies and to ensure that they are kept current.

Questions related to board policies include: Are board policies easily located and referred to when necessary? Have these policies been brought up-to-date with current requirements and regulations?

Resources:

Duke, D.L. and R.L. Canady. (1991). *School Policy.* New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Tuttle, E.M. (1963). *School Board Leadership in America.* Chicago, IL: The Interstate Printers and Publishers.

3 **Are administrative rules and regulations published, readily available, and up-to-date? Are they congruent with district policies?**

Administrative rules and regulations are the "nuts and bolts" of school governance. They are usually developed by administrative staff to implement board-established policies. They are the directions for putting policies into effect. Rules and/or regulations concerning how specific school policies are to be administered should be clearly written and easily understood by those who are affected by them and those who enforce them.

Resources:

First, P.F. (1992). *Educational Policy for School Administrators.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Funk, R.S. (1988). *Distinguishing Between Policy and Administrative Rules and Regulations.* Paper presented at the Annual Fall Conference of the Michigan Association of School Boards, Grand Rapids, MI. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 304 744, October)

Poston, W.K., M.P. Stone, and C. Muther. (1992). *Making Schools Work.* Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
4	**Are administrative procedures established and consistent with district policies and regulations (i.e. registration, curriculum development)? Are these procedures organized and accessible?**

Administrative procedures indicate how certain activities will be carried out. It is important to have established procedures so that all staff conducting the same or similar activities will proceed in a uniform manner; consistency can be better achieved when procedures exist.

Questions related to administrative procedures include: What is the procedure for registering a new student? for developing curriculum? for reporting suspected child abuse? Do these procedures make sense (given new technologies)?

Resources:

Buford, J.L. (1964). "Policy and Procedure Manuals—How to Compile, How to Use." *School Executive's Guide.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 665-697.

Duke, D.L. and R.L. Canady. (1991). *School Policy.* New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

King, M.D. and L. Harrison. (1997). *Developing School Programs and Policies: A Principal's Manual.* Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishing.

Wey, H.A. (1966). *Handbook for Principals.* New York, NY: Schaum Publishing Co.

5	**Are the master schedule and master calendar current and in place?**

The master calendar and the master schedule are integral parts of school district functioning. The master schedule must be revised annually to reflect changes in course offerings and teaching staff. From time to time, different forms of scheduling should also be considered. The district's master calendar should also be published and distributed annually so that community members know when various school events are scheduled to take place.

Resources:

Dempsey, R.A. and H.P. Traverso. (1983). "Scheduling the Secondary School." Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 254 963)

Lake, S. (1988). "Scheduling the Middle Level School: Philosophy into Practice." Sacramento, CA: California League of Middle Schools. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 300 920)

6	**Does the district systematically engage in enrollment forecasting on a regular basis?**

Enrollment forecasting is the process of making predictions about future student enrollments. The three primary factors affecting school populations are births, migration, and holding power. The *cohort survival ratio method* is widely accepted as the best means of projecting school membership.

Forecasting is a key administrative function because many important decisions depend on this information.

Questions related to enrollment forecasting include: How many staff will the district need in the future? Will additional materials and equipment be needed? Will any new buildings be required, or will any buildings be closed?

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

Resources:

Blair, B.G. (1985). "The Evolution of a Forecasting Model and the Utility for Planning in a Large Metropolitan School District." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 285 281)

Dembowski, F.L. and S. Van Hoesen. (1997). "Predicting 21st Century School Enrollment: Assumptions, Tools and Tips." *School Business Affairs* 63, 4:11-15.

Hentschke, G. C. (1975). Software: "Management Operations in Education." Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing Corporation.

Smith, C. A. (1995). *Enroll Forecast: K-12 Enrollment Forecasting Program.* Reston, VA: ASBO International.

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7 **Is an annual program planning process in place?**

A school district working to continually improve itself should have an annual program planning process in place so that key stakeholders can examine what is being done and consider ways to make improvements. A quality school district seeks to be proactive rather than reactive; planning is the key to being proactive. The results of this program planning process need to be integrated with the strategic planning process and the annual budgeting process to add coherence to these activities.

Resources:

Sagor, R. and B.G. Barnett. (1994). *The TQE Principal.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

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8 **Is the method used to deliver instruction approriate for the organizational structure?**

Grade level organization is an issue fraught with dispute and differences of opinion. Attention must be paid to ensure that the instruction delivered at different levels is appropriate to those levels.

Questions related to grade level organization include: Does the curriculum fit in with the district plan? Are instructional materials on target for particular grade levels? Is the organizational structure used appropriate for the district's needs?

Resources:

Rebore, R.W. (1984). *A Handbook for School Board Members.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Thompson, J. (1986). *Environmental Education, K-12.* Great Falls, MT: Great Falls Public Schools. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 272 376)

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
9	**Does instructional program articulation exist across all grades, K-12?** Instructional program articulation can be defined as the systematic coordination of course and/or program content across school buildings within a school district to facilitate the continuous and efficient progress of students from grade to grade. Questions related to articulation include: Is there a well-defined plan for the movement of students from grade to grade in each subject area? Are program-level objectives clearly defined? **Resources:** Poindexter, B. and H. Korra. (1991). "Practicing Democracy through Equity Education." Indianapolis, IN: Warren Township Independent School District. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 350 206) Wilson, J.A. (1988). "Foreign Language Program Articulation: Building Bridges from Elementary to Secondary School." Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.
10	**Are professional development activities provided for school board members?** School administrators have a special role in educating policymakers. This may be enhanced by providing professional development activities for board members beginning with an orientation session for new members. Other forms of professional development activities include workshops, training sessions, and conferences designed to enhance professional growth. Does your district provide these opportunities? The National School Boards Association has as its mission to help achieve "excellence and equity in public education through school board leadership." It offers an annual conference and provides a variety of resources for local school board members to become better informed on a variety of important educational issues. One of the major goals of the California School Boards Association (CSBA) is to provide continuing education for school board members. CSBA offers school board members the opportunity to develop "boardsmanship skills" and to enhance their knowledge about educational issues and trends. A number of professional development activities are offered to local school board members. **Resources:** California School Boards Association, 3100 Beacon Boulevard, West Sacramento, CA. (www.csba.org) National School Boards Association, 1680 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA. (www.nsba.org)

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
11	**Does the district have a plan for school closings due to weather conditions and other emergencies? Does the plan include a current phone tree and other methods for disseminating closing information?** Most school districts, especially those in colder climates, are experienced in the process of unanticipated school closings due to weather or other emergencies. The major concern in this area is the efficient dissemination of information. Phone trees and broadcast announcements have typically been used although new technology may provide even quicker means of disseminating information. Questions related to school closings include: Has the district evaluated the effectiveness of its current system of disseminating closing information? Does the district have an explicit policy and process for determining when emergency school closings should occur? **Resource:** Clemmer, E.F. (1991). *The School Policy Handbook.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
12	**Are organizational structures and relationships clearly defined and accurate?** Organizational charts are often used as formal representations of organizational structures and relationships. While these are useful, organizational relationships and interactions often do not conform to the structure imposed. The purpose of an organization is to maximize the use of available resources to accomplish the goal of the organization. Questions related to organizational structures and relationships include: Are the various structures of the school organization easily identified? Are the interrelationships of the various parts of the school organization well defined? Do these concepts get linked to human resource concerns such as job descriptions? **Resources:** Jones, J.J., C.J. Salisbury, and R.L. Spencer. (1969). *Secondary School Administration.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Co. Rebore, R.W. (1984). *A Handbook for School Board Members.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	I.B OPERATING POLICY/GOVERNANCE – IMPROVEMENT
13	**Are any new policies, procedures, and regulations in the germination stage that might be advanced by this review process?**

One purpose of undergoing a self-review is to determine whether any changes need to be made in an organization's operations. After working through this review tool, will the board decide to revise any of its policies, procedures, and regulations?

The first place to turn while revising school board policy, procedures, or regulations should be Clemmer's *The School Policy Handbook*. This is an excellent, practical guide on how to answer such questions as: Is the district being managed in the way you want or expect? Do policies and practices align with the district's philosophy? Do personnel in different schools manage similar incidents in different ways?

Resources:

Clemmer, E.F. (1991). *The School Policy Handbook*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Van Alfen, C. (March 1993). "School Board Policy as an Instrument of Empowering Leadership in America." Paper presented at the Annual Conference on Creating Quality Schools, Oklahoma City, OK. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 358 518)

14	**Is there a continuous improvement process (program) in place in the district?**

A continuous improvement process is a fundamental component of the total quality management (TQM) program as stipulated in the writings of W. Edwards Deming (1994). The keys to total quality management as specified by Deming are:

- Serving the customer
- Continuous improvement
- Speaking with facts, gaining a "profound knowledge" of the organization
- Respect for people

A quality school district is one that seeks to continually improve itself. In order for continuous improvement to take place, a belief in the importance of quality must start at the top, with the board of education and the superintendent. An important part of continuous improvement is ongoing evaluation. Are such evaluative procedures in place? Is continuous improvement a stated goal?

TQM, while sometimes criticized as a fad in management concepts, has been an influential concept in recent years. The continuous improvement process is linked to the *PADS Cycle* (**P**lan, **D**o, **S**tudy, **A**ct). Has the leadership of your district studied these ideas? Have methods of managing for quality been considered?

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

Resources:

Deming, W.E. (1994). *The New Economics for Industry, Government, Education. 2nd ed.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Center for Advanced Engineering Study.

Law, J.E., and J.S. Law. (1994). *TQM in Education: A Guide to Survival.* Reston, VA:ASBO International.

Schmidt, W.H. and J.P. Finnigan. (1992). *The Race Without a Finish Line.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schmoker, M.J. and R.B. Wlson. (1993). *Total Quality Education.* Bloomingtin, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

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15 **Are instructional and support staff members actively engaged in policy development and governance activities?**

A constant struggle exists between the need for full staff involvement in policy development and the need to make decisions efficiently. The actual decision-making process often requires a degree of confidentiality and is ultimately limited to those in a policymaking role. The deliberations leading up to a decision, on the other hand, are best served with broad-based input. The goal of school-based management is to improve the quality of educational programs by involving principal stakeholders.

Questions related to engaging instructional and support staff members in policy development and governance activities include: Are teachers and support staffs involved in policy development and governance? Does what they say count? What procedures are used to bring these ideas to the attention of the school board and administration?

Resources:

Glasser, W. (1990). *The Quality School.* New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers.

Hoy, W.K. and C.J. Tarter. (1997). *The Road to Open and Healthy Schools: A Handbook for Change.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

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16 **To what extent is risk-taking behavior fostered in the district?**

Risk-taking behavior is often discouraged by large organizations in favor of maintenance of the status quo. Risk-taking involves trying something new, taking a chance, or making changes in the current way of doin hings. Therefore, it sometimes involves failure. Because of this, an organization's tolerance for risk-taking is linked to the organization's tolerance of failure. For this reason, risk-taking is often shunned in many organizational settings. Risk-taking and a tolerance for failure are important because both facilitate change.

Resources:

Hord, S.M., W.L. Rutherford, L. Huling-Austin, and G.E. Hall. (1987). *Taking Charge of Change.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Huberman, A.M. and M.B. Miles. (1984). *Innovation Up Close.* New York, NY: Plenum Press.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
17	**To what extent are team-building, group process, delegation, and shared decision-making encouraged and rewarded?** Team building is the process of encouraging collaboration. Such efforts often need to be reconciled with an organizational reward structure that only recognizes individual, not team, achievement. Site-based management is usually cited as the concept that embraces the collaborative approach to management. In this form of school management, the emphasis is on involving teachers, students, community members, and school administrators in shared decision making. Research has shown that shared decision making improves school climate, which in turn affects student achievement. Team-building and group process are aspects of shared decision making. **Resource:** Hatry, H.P., E. Morley, B. Ashford, and T.M. Wyatt. (1993). *Implementing School-Based Management: Insights into Decentralization from Science and Mathematics Departments.* Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
18	**Does the district strategic planning process produce results that are translated into policy and procedures? Is there a formal monitoring process to track this action?** Strategic planning is the disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. The major purpose of a strategic plan is to prepare an organization to respond effectively to external threats before a crisis emerges. Questions related to strategic planning include: Has the district been through a strategic planning process? If so, have the results been incorporated into district policy? **Resources:** Kaufman, R. (1988). *Planning Educational Systems: A Results Based Approach.* Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Co., Inc. Poston, W.K. (1994). *Making Governance Work: TQE for School Boards.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	I.C OPERATING POLICY/GOVERNANCE – DEVELOPMENT
19	**Does the district have a 5- to 10-year, even 20-year, planning process that identifies and analyzes potential demographic change?**

Multi-year scanning or projections is a process of systematically compiling data on district demographic characteristics. From this database, projections (optimistic, middle ground, and pessimistic) can be made using various projection techniques (best guess, trend, or deterministic) for a 5- to 20-year time horizon.

Questions to be cosidered during a planning process that identifies and analyzes demographic changes include: What are the school population projections and general demographic characteristics of the district's population in 5, 10, or even 20 years from now? How do these projections affect the mission and the plans for the district? What is the likely future economic capacity of the district?

Resources:

Dembowski, F.L. and Van Hoesen, S. (1997). "Predicting 21st Century School Enrollment: Assumptions, Tools and Tips." *School Business Affairs*, 63, 4.

Sybouts, W. (1992). *Planning in School Administration, A Handbook*. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.

20	**To what extent are existing organizational structures able to accommodate future instructional programming?**

Organization and instruction go hand in hand in an effective school; a good organizational structure sets the stage for good teaching.

Questions related to organizational structure include: Has the organizational structure of the school been examined to determine how instruction can be improved? How will the current organizational structure accommodate future needs of the district? What modifications need to be made to the current structure?

Resources:

Schmuck, R.A. and P.J. Runkel. (1985). *The Handbook of Organizational Development in Schools*. Prospect Heights, ILL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Snyder, K.J. and R.H. Anderson. (1986). *Managing Productive Schools*. Orlando, FL: Academic Press, Inc.

21	**Does the district's planning process include methods for policy development and evaluation of policy suggestions or initiatives?**

The stakeholders in an organization are the people invested in the functioning of the system: students, parents, teachers, support staff, administrators, board members, and community members. When using site-based management and strategic planning procedures in school systems, it is important to emphasize input from a wide variety of stakeholders.

Resources:

Covey, S.R. (1991). *Principle-Centered Leadership*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Poston, W.K. (1994). *Making Governance Work: TQE for School Boards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

II.A HUMAN RESOURCES – MAINTENANCE

22 **Does the district have recruitment policies and procedures for instructional and support personnel?**

Recruitment policies and procedures are designed to ensure that qualified individuals are identified and attracted to available jobs in the district. Important issues recruitment policies and procedures should address include:

- Whether recruitment will be from within or outside the organization or both.
- What the scope of external recruitment will be—local, regional, national, or international.
- Which methods and media will be utilized to attract applicants (possibilities include current employees, referral or private employment services, private executive recruiters on either a retainer or contingency basis, advertising in newspapers or professional publications, online advertising, and campus recruiting).
- What approaches will be needed to provide potential applicants with information about jobs, the organization, and career opportunities.
- Whether job or organizational previews are part of the recruitment strategy.

Resources:

Breaugh, J.W. (1992). *Recruiting :Science and Practice.* Boston: PWS-Kent.

Dreher, G F. and D.W. Kendall. (1995). "Organizational Stuffing." *Handbook of Human Resource Management* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publisher Inc, 446-461.

Rynes, S.I. and A.E. Barber. (1990). "Applicant Attraction Strategies: An Organizational Perspective" *Academy of Management Review* 15, 3: 286-310.

23 **Does the district have policies and procedures in place for staff retention and turn-over management?**

Staff retention policies are basically designed to minimize staff turn-over. A number of factors can cause staff attrition, including voluntary turn-over resulting from "burn-out," better opportunities elsewhere, and the effects of organizational restructuring and down-sizing. The policies and procedures an organization can use to retain top-performing employees include:

- Implementation of performance contingency incentives or pay systems;
- Training, promotion, advancement, or other developmental policies and practices;
- Availability and flexibility of benefit options; and
- Provision of opportunities to pursue interesting and challenging new job assignments.

Resources:

Dreher, G.F (1982) "The Role of Performance in the Turnover Process" *Academy of Management Journal* 25, 3:137-147.

Schuler, R. S (1984) *Personnel and Human Resource Management.* 2nd ed. New York: West Publishing Co.

Wood, C.A., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management.* Reston, VA: ASBO International

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
24	**Are all human resource policies, procedures, and plans current, including job descriptions?**

All educational institutions experience change in their environments, giving rise to the need to keep human resource plans and policies current. Job descriptions are especially vulnerable to becoming outdated. In practical terms, such human resource planning and policy development must focus on:

- Formulating and implementing strategies to address people-related organizational issues.
- Enabling administrators to manage people effectively to ensure increasing organizational effectiveness.
- Redefining the human resource staff function—its organization, roles, and capabilities.
- Defining and applying organizational measures of human resource effectiveness, focusing on organizational impact.

Resources:

Association of School Business Officials International. (1995). *The New Job Description Handbook for the School Business Office.* Reston, VA: ASBO International.

Mills, D.Q. (1985). "Planning with People in Mind." *Harvard Business Review* 63, 4: 97-105.

Ulrich, D. (1986) "Human Resource Planning as a Competitive Edge." *Human Resource Planning* 9, 2: 41-60.

Walker, J.W. (1982). *Human Resource Strategy.* New York: McGraw-Hill

Walker, J.W. (1980). *Human Resource Planning.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

25	**To what extent are existing human resource policies in compliance with federal and state regulations?**

Myriad federal and state regulations specify the human resource actions required and prohibited. It is vital that every district have someone knowledgeable and current on applicable state and federal requirements, including the regulations from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the National Labor Relations Board, and statutory regulations at the state level. State and national professional associations can be especially helpful in providing current information.

Resource:

Castallo, R T., M.R. Fletcher, A.D. Rossetti, and R.W. Sekowski. (1992). *School Personnel Administration: A Practitioners Guide.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
26	**Does the district have specific staff professional development plans? Are staff development activities evaluated?**

Effective staff development improves current or future employee performance by increasing, through learning, an employee's skills, knowledge, and abilities. The need for staff professional development is determined by the employee deficiency formula computed as:

Standard or desired performance (present or future) – Actual (present or potential) performance = Development required

A staff development program requires access and support to development opportunities internal and external to the district. Some of the obvious needs include increasing capacity to cope with rapidly changing technologies and techniques, which makes employees flexible and adaptable. Staff development should increase the level of employee commitment and increase their perceptions that the organization is a good place to work.

Resources:

London, M. and R. Wueste. (1992). *Human Resource Development in Changing Organizations.* Westport, CT: Quorum Books

Sussman, P.E. (1986) "The Training Organization." *Handbook of Human Resource Administration.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc.

Ulschak, F. (1983) *Human Resource Development: The Theory and Practice of Need Review.* Reston, VA: Reston Publishing Company Inc.

27	**Are personnel records maintained and up-to-date? Do they include documentation of tenure, seniority, training, and certification?**

Personnel records are critical to effective and efficient personnel administration. They have taken on added importance as federal and state labor and anti-discrimination laws have been implemented. Personnel records must be accurate and complete. Certain information must be retained and made easily available for managers and supervisors, as well as union, government, reference, and personnel staff.

Most personnel offices maintain an individual file for each employee. These records may include the original application, a test profile, replies to inquiries, and other helpful information obtained at time of hire. To these basic data are added all performance ratings, salary increases and rejections, transfer notices, leave of absence notices, a list of training attended, certifications, and finally, where appropriate, the termination notice and exit interview report.

A key issue in personnel records involves the rights to access these sensitive records. Most districts have specific policies concerning permissible annual audits, by employees, of individual personnel files.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	Resources:
	Armstrong, M. (1988). *A Handbook of Personnel Management Practice.* New York: Nichols Publishing.
	Diamond, S.Z. (1995). *Records Management: A Practical Approach*, 2nd edition. Chicago: Amacon.
	Odgers, P. (1996). *Administrative Office Management: Strategies for the 21st Century.* New York: West/Wadsworth.
	Scheer, W.E. (1979). *Personnel Administration Handbook.* Chicago, IL: Dartnell Press.
28	**Are fringe benefits reviewed to ensure that the best possible options for the employee and the district are offered?**
	Fringe benefits can be categorized into three types: protection programs, pay for time not worked, and employee services and prerequisites. Fringe benefits are important to an organization in attracting good employees, increasing employee morale, reducing turnover, increasing job satisfaction, motivating employees, enhancing the organization's image among employees, and making better use of compensation resources.
	The fringe benefit package for a district is typically determined by the collective bargaining agreement. The key management task is to determine whether the district is receiving the most beneficial package for the money the district is spending. Careful analysis should also be given to selection (a "cafeteria selection") versus "one size fits all" types of benefit packages. Typically, districts rely on outside professional consultants to provide annual audits and recommendations about fringe benefit packages.
	Resources:
	Beam, B.T., Jr. and J.J. McFadden. (1996). *Employee Benefits.* 4th ed. Dearborn, MI: Dearborn Financial Publishing, Inc.
	Chonko, L.B. and R.W. Griffin. (1983). "Trade off Analysis Funds the Best Reward Combinations." *Personnel Administrator* 59, 5:13-17.
	Hackett, P. (1989). *Success in Management Personnel.* London, UK: John Murray.
	Huseman, J.D. (1978). "Getting Your Benefits Programs Understood and Appreciated." *Personnel Journal* 54, 11:25-30.
29	**Are grievance policies appropriate, documented, and effective?**
	The organization uses the disciplinary policies and procedures when it has a cause to complain about the behavior of an employee. Grievance policies provide an avenue for employees to air their complaints against the organization. These policies help prevent minor disagreements from turning into major conflicts. They can also improve employee retention. Grievance policies are typically enumerated in collective bargaining agreements but should always:

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Question Number **Questions/Explanations/Resources**

- Be in writing
- Specify to whom employees should take a grievance in first instance and that they have a right to be accompanied by a colleague or union representative.
- State to whom an employee should address a grievance that remains unresolved.
- Indicate a timeframe within which the aggrieved employee can expect to be notified of the outcome of the complaint.
- Stipulate that all meetings to discuss grievances be properly recorded and that a record of the proceeding be sent to all involved parties.

Resources:

Dorio, M.A. (1989). *Personnel Managers Desk Book*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Flippo, E .B. (1976). *Principles of Personnel Management* 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.

Hackett, P. (1989). *Success in Management: Personnel*. London: John Murray Publishers Ltd.

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30 **Are periodic labor-management meetings held, and are the results recorded and communicated?**

The labor-management relations system involves workers, management, policymakers, and the union. The conditions of labor relations are regulated by enabling legislation in each state and under the National Labor Relations Board at the federal government level. The relationship between labor and management are sometimes adversarial. When cooperative relationships exist, union and management are able to engage in problem solving, information sharing, and integration of shared outcomes. Thus, management and labor may engage in productivity bargaining, concessionary bargaining, and continuous bargaining.

Resources:

Angel, H. and J. Perry. (1986). "Dual Commitment and Labor-Management Relationship Climates." *Academy of Management Journal* 29, 1: 31-50.

Guest, D.E. (1995). "Human Resource Management, Trade Unions and Industrial Relations." *Human Resource Management: A Critical Text*. New York: Routledge, 110-141.

Schuler, R.S. (1984). *Personal and Human Resource Management* 2nd ed. New York: West Publishing Co.

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31 **Are additional assignments to staff adequately documented and clearly communicated?**

In many organizations, employees are assigned additional duties beyond the scope of their primary employment roles, and the descriptions of these additional assignments are often informal. This can lead to confusion and uncertainty, especially when accountability and performance evaluation is related to these additional roles. When additional roles and duties are assigned, it is important to formally communicate: (1) What is to be done. (the domains, behaviors, results, and duties) (2) What products are to be generated. (the purpose of the job) (3) What standards are to be applied. (standards such as quality and quantity) (4) Under what conditions the job is to be performed. (5) The specific tasks related to the role or duty.

35

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	Resources:
	Armstrong, M. (1988). *A Handbook of Personnel Management Practice.* New York: Nichols Publishing.Markowitz, J. (1981). "Four Methods of Job Analysis." *Training and Development Journal* 5, 3: 112-121.
	Ostell, A. (1989) "Personnel Selection." *Human Resource Management.* Kent UK: Chatwell-Bratt LTD. 42-73.
32	**Is an individual performance evaluation (summative and formative) regularly conducted on all personnel and are the results appropriately documented and communicated?**
	Individual performance evaluation refers to the formal, structured system of measuring, evaluating, and influencing an employee's job-related attributes, behaviors, and outcomes to gauge at what level the employee is performing. Performance evaluation seeks to answer the question: How productive is the employee and can he or she perform more effectively in the future?
	Evaluations can be *formative (*occurring before the completion of a task) or *summative* (occurring after a task has been completed). Performance evaluation results should be measured against job requirements. A performance evaluation can measure an employee's job-related attributes (e.g. extent of cooperativeness or initiative), process (how they do their job), or outcomes (quality and quantity of output). Results from performance evaluations are used for a variety of purposes, including to inform promotion and salary adjustment decisions.
	Resources:
	Castallo, R T., M.R. Fletcher, A.D. Rossetti, and R.W. Sekowski. (1992). *School Personnel Administration: A Practitioners Guide.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
33	**Does the district maintain and monitor a staff absenteeism management system?**
	Absentee management involves the development of a system to record and monitor the absentee rates of teachers and staff. The objective is to identify and rectify any abuses of attendance policies.
	Resources:
	Heisler, W.J. (1988) *Managing Human Resources Issues: Confronting Challenges and Choosing Options.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
	Schuler, R.S. (1984). *Personnel and Human Resource Management,* 2nd ed. New York: West Publishing Company.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
34	**Are tenure decisions given careful consideration using well-documented information and evaluations?**

The tenure decision is the most expensive decision most administrators make. Tenure decisions have always provoked many concerns from teachers and administrators, and public concern with instructional effectiveness and teacher competence has grown in recent years. The public perception is that the tenure process is ineffective and simply protects incompetence. A well-structured and acceptable tenure process must consider honest teacher evaluations and other documented information about teaching effectiveness.

Resources:

Baez, B. and J. Centra. (1995). "Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment: Legal and Administrative Implications." Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education.

Ellet, C.D. (1997) "Classroom-Based Review of Teaching and Learning." *Evaluating Teaching: A Guide to Current Thinking and Best Practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc. 107-124.

Hodgkinson, H.L. (1973). "Faculty Reward and Review Systems." *The Tenure Debate.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass Inc. Publishers.

Magid, J.G. (1973). "Promotion and Good Teaching." *The Tenure Debate.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass Inc. Publishers.

Redfern, G.B. (1980). *Evaluating Teachers and Administrators: A Performance Objective Approach.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

II.B HUMAN RESOURCES – IMPROVEMENT

35	**Is an annual review of human resource needs conducted?**

An annual review of human resource needs involves estimating the number and kinds of employees needed to deliver appropriate educational services. During such reviews, consideration is given to a number of factors, including: (1) composition of jobs in the present organization, vacant positions, estimation of losses through normal attrition, and possible surpluses of skills or people; (2) possible increased productivity in present jobs; (3) anticipated new projects or programs and their human resource needs; and (4) anticipated changes in the system. A variety of techniques are used in such reviews. These are divided into two classes: judgmental forecasts and conventional statistical projections.

Staffing plans attempt to reconcile an organization's need for human resources with the available supply in the local and national labor market. Such plans seek to ensure essential staff will be available and ready, in the right numbers and disciplines. The process of planning for staff needs is complicated. Issues to consider include: the number of employees currently employed, employees' age profile, the deployment of the employees, departmental distribution, skills possessed by current staff, areas of the organization that tend to 'lose' an atypical number of employees, and average attrition rates.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

Resources:

Beunison, M. and Casson, J. (1984) *Manpower Planning.* Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

O'Doherty, E. (1994). "Towards Human Resource Planning." *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Perspective,* London: Pitmon Publishing. 118-156.

Scheer, W.E. (1979). *Personnel Administration Handbook.* Chicago, IL: Dartnell Press.

Schuler, R.S. (1984). *Personnel and Human Resource Management.* New York: West Publishing Co

Ulschak, F.L. (1983) *Human Resource Development: The Theory and Practice of Need Review.* Reston, VA: Reston Publishing Co. Inc.

36 **Has the district considered developing a flexible fringe benefit plan?**

The Flexible Fringe Benefit Plan has been described as the "cafeteria menu" approach to benefits. In this scheme, the employer provides a core package of benefits that covers needs like medical, dental, retirement, disability, and vacation to all employees. The employees then choose from optional benefits to tailor the core package to meet their individual needs. Employers introduce the flexible benefit scheme to ensure flexibility in the compensation package, to improve retention and recruitment, to offer employees rewards they desire and thereby increase their motivation, to maintain "value of money" with the benefits provided, and to create single-status employment.

Resources:

Roberts, I.R. (1994). "Remuneration and Reward. "*Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Perspective.* London: Pitman Publishing . 449-556.

Woodley, C. (1993). "The Benefits of Flexibility." *Personnel Management* 24, 5: 36-39.

37 **Is there full staff commitment to and involvement in personnel evaluation?**

Many staff members resist involvement in personnel evaluation, but sound human resource policy depends on full participation and effective evaluation. Repeated calls for merit pay make this issue especially critical. Staff evaluation can only be beneficial when the relationship between supervisors and subordinates is cordial and rapport is evident. A rigid, superior-subordinate relationship detracts from a good evaluation climate.

Personnel evaluation must be both summative and formative, must accommodate positive and negative feedback, and must involve opportunities for "coaching." High involvement of staff in evaluation is obtained when: the superior-subordinate working relationship is good, improved performance is the chief objective of the process, the evaluator and evaluated put emphasis upon performance, and the evaluation process is cooperative.

38

Resources:

Langlois, D.E. and W. McAdams. (1992). *Performance Appraisal of School Management: Evaluating the Administrative Team.* Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Co, Inc.

Stufflebeam, D.L. (1988). *The Personnel Evaluation Standards: How to Review Systems for Evaluating Educators.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Redfern, G.B. (1980). *Evaluating Teachers and Administrators.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	II.C HUMAN RESOURCES - DEVELOPMENT
38	**Does the district actively engage in analysis and planning for future labor agreements? Does this include a consideration of long-term collective bargaining strategies?**

Negotiation, administration, and interpretation of labor agreements are achieved through the bargaining between management and labor. From a management perspective, organizations must analyze issues and develop plans and tactics for future agreements. This requires a consideration of the needs of the organization, the mandatory bargaining issues, the bargaining process, wages, economic and supplements, as well as other institutional and administrative issues.

Resources:

Herman, J.J. and G.E. Megiveron (1993). *Collective Bargaining in Education.* Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Co. Inc.

Marlow, S. S. (1994). " Collective Bargaining." *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Perspective.* London: Pitman Publishing. 470-498.

Stoops, E. et al. (1990). *Handbook of Educational Administration: A Guide for the Practitioner.* Hamheights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

39	**Does the district have a 5- to 10-year retirement projection and staffing needs analysis?**

The aging of instructional and support staff requires careful analysis and projections of the potential for retirement of staff well in advance of the fact. Such analysis helps school districts determine:

- How many employees in which positions will be needed to fill vacancies created by the anticipated retirement of current employees.
- How these new employees will be obtained (e.g., from outside recruiting or internal transfers and promotions).
- What the training and staff development needs of the organization will be?

A number of techniques can be used to make these projections, including the Expert Estimate technique; the Trend Projection technique; modeling and multiple-predictive techniques; and the unit demand forecasting technique.

Resources:

Dorio, M.A. (1989). *Personnel Managers Desk Book.* Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Famularo, J.J. (1986). *Handbook of Human Resource Administration.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Schuler, R.S. (1984). *Personnel and Human Resource Management.* New York, NY: West Publishing Co.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	III.A FINANCING – MAINTENANCE
40	**Does the district have well-articulated annual operating budgeting processes and procedures?**

The annual operating budget is crucial to the allocation of resources to meet educational needs. All school districts have some form of budget development or budget-making process in place. In many cases, this process must comply with specific state regulatory requirements, but effective administrators consider additional issues that may not be legally defined, such as the use of program budgeting or allocation of indirect costs. The well-articulated budget-making process should identify a timetable for budget development, assign responsibilities for various analyses and projections, and accommodate broad-based involvement.

Resources:

Hartman, W.T. (1988). *School District Budgeting*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall

Hughes, J. T. and K. Kodabaugh (1998). *Multimedia Budget Presentations*. Reston, VA: ASBO International.

Klein, J. (1997). "Transforming Your Budget Vision Into Reality." *School Business Affairs* 63, 11: 24-25.

41 **Does the district use line item or program budget allocations, together with encumbrance accounting, to control spending?**

Once an annual operating budget is adopted, action must be taken to ensure that the normal course of spending is in line with the adopted budget. In governmental or fund accounting, two traditional means are used to ensure that such consistency exists. The first of these controls is to separate or allocate the approved budget into approved spending by organizational units, by line item (type of expenditure) or program (type of investment). No operating unit may spend more than its allocation for each line item or program unless approved by the policymaking body, therefore, operating managers receive regular (monthly) reports reflecting total allocations compared with actual expenditures and encumbrances to date.

Encumbrances and encumbrance accounting is a control mechanism feature of fund accounting practice that essentially sets aside an estimated amount of obligation at the time the initial obligation is committed but before the actual amount of the obligation is fully known. This involves an accounting entry and is thus used to prevent obligations in excess of budgeted resources. Using this system, every manager should be able to readily determine any "unencumbered balance" for any expenditure item at any point in time.

40

Resources:

Everett, R.E., R.L. Lows, and D. Johnson. (1996). *Financial and Managerial Accounting for School Administrators*. Reston, VA: ASBO International.

Hartman, W.T. (1988). *School District Budgeting*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
42	**Do accounting practices conform to the requirements of GAAP and GAAFR?** Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Generally Accepted Accounting Financial Reporting (GAAFR) pertain to the conventions or standards used in fund accounting in government. GAAP and GAAFR describe those practices and procedures found over time to be most useful. In the case of financial accounting for school districts, the standards for these practices have their origins with the National Council on Governmental Accounting. A standard chart of accounts and specific practices for recording and reporting are requirements of many state departments of education. **Resources:** Anthony, R.N. and D. Young. (1994). *Management Control in Nonprofit Organizations.* 5th ed. Homewood, IL: Irwin. Everett, R.E., R.L. Lows, and D. Johnson. (1996). *Financial and Managerial Accounting for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International. Hack, W.G., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1998). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach.* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. Hentschke, G.C. (1986). *School Business Administration: A Comparative Perspective.* Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing Corporation.
43	**Are adequate financial internal controls established and maintained?** The whole concept of internal controls is the bedrock on which financial operations are transacted with integrity. These controls include such vital checks as separating responsibility for receiving revenue from disbursement authority. A managerial financial audit conducted by a professional accounting firm is highly recommended for school districts. One component of such an audit is a review of these controls. **Resources:** Davidson, S. and R.L. Weil. (1983). *Handbook of Modern Accounting.* 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. Everett, R.E., R.L. Lows, and D. Johnson. (1996). *Financial and Managerial Accounting for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International.
44	**Are financial reports in compliance with legal requirements?** Financial reporting is crucial to management control. Reports must comply with legal requirements but they must also meet the test of providing useful management information and be issued accurately on a timely basis. **Resources:** Everett, R.E., R.L. Lows, and D. Johnson. (1996). *Financial and Managerial Accounting for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
45	**Are results of the annual audit available and are all suggested improvements acted upon?** The annual financial audit report is an important document; it verifies the financial status of the school district. A financial audit should contain both summative and formative evaluation results, and should contain explicit recommendations for management changes. This report provides a corrected basis for financial records in subsequent years as well as important information about financial operations to policymakers, citizens, and financial institutions. For these reasons it is important that the audit report be disseminated in some form and be readily available for reference. Questions related to the annual financial audit include: Is the audit publicly presented and adopted? Is it distributed in at least summary form and available for reference in its entirety? Are required and appropriate actions taken as a result of the audit? **Resources:** Everett, R.E., R.L. Lows, and D. Johnson. (1996). *Financial and Managerial Accounting for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International. Tierney, C.E. (1983). *Public Sector Auditing.* Washington, DC: Commerce Clearing House, Inc.
46	**Does the district have policies and procedures that safeguard its financial assets, including investments?** The primary goal of cash management is to ensure cash availability and maximize yield. Because cash assets are public and vital to school operations, all appropriate protections for these assets must be in place and functioning. The financial assets of a public school district require explicit attention to safeguards such as fidelity bonding of agents, minimum reserve requirements in bank accounts, and collateral arrangement for all investments. State regulations typically dictate the minimum safeguards that must be in place. **Resources:** Dembowski, F. L. (1986). "Cash Management." In *School Business Administration: A Comparative Perspective,* edited by G.C. Hentschke. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing Corporation. Hoyle, J., F. English, and B. Steffy. (1998). *Skills for Successful 21st Century School Leaders.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.
47	**Does the district prepare in advance for the annual financial audit?** An annual audit is a legal requirement for any public school district, and is typically conducted by an independent certified public accountant. The actual audit should be proceeded by a period of preparation and planning by school staff. Before the auditor is scheduled to begin, the district should ensure that all pertinent information is readily available, that bid documents or contracts are in place for the auditor, and that site visits by the auditor are planned for, if needed. **Resources:** Everett, R.E., R.L. Lows, and D. Johnson. (1996). *Financial and Managerial Accounting for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International. Tierney, C. E. (1983) *Public Sector Auditing.* Washington, DC: Commerce Clearing House, Inc.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

III.B FINANCING – IMPROVEMENT

48 **Is there a plan to increase community and instructional and support staff involvement in the budget development process?**

For a host of reasons, the budget-development process in school districts is often a highly restrictive one, limited to involvement by the superintendent and a few key advisors. This restrictive nature can lead to instructional and support staff frustration that could easily be minimized by genuinely opening the process to interested stakeholders.

Questions related to involvement in the budget-development process include: Does the district have a finance committee that includes key stakeholders from the staff and community? Are staff held accountable for their input?

Resources:

Hartman, W.T. (1988). *School District Budgeting.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

American Society of Business Officials. <www.asbointl.org>

National Association of Federal Program Administrators. <www.nafepa.org>

III.C FINANCING – DEVELOPMENT

49 **Is a method in place for reviewing the likely changes in local, state, and federal financing policy that will affect district financing?**

Local school budgets are significantly influenced by any change in state or federal funding and changes in financing requirements by other local governmental entities. Cultivating open relationships with local government officials can provide opportunities for local coordination of resource demands. In the case of school aid, state and national associations can be a good source of information.

Resource:

Hack, W.G., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1998). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach.* 6th Ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

50 **Has the district considered developing a system of full costing?**

Full costing can be valuable in the analysis and establishment of cost recovery or priorities, but very few, if any, schools have embraced this accounting concept because it entails a time-consuming and difficult process. Full costing requires the delineation of responsibility centers or cost objects, the identification of direct and indirect costs, and the assignment of indirect costs to direct cost centers. Despite the difficulties associated with the concept and the absence of legal requirements to do full costing, it can be a valuable management tool for comparing the true cost of various program activities.

Resources:

Anthony, R.N. and D. Young. (1994). *Management Control in Nonprofit Organizations.* 5th Ed. Homewood, IL: Irwin.

Speakman, S.T., B.S. Cooper, H.D. Holsomback., J.F. May, R.A. Sampieri, and L. Maloney. (1996). "Tracking Expenditures to the Classroom." *School Business Affairs* 62, 2: 35-47.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
51	**Has the district considered developing multi-year operating budget projections?** There is typically no legal requirement for multi-year budget projections or forecasts and most school districts do not engage in the practice. However, without such projections, an opportunity for anticipating financial futures is lost. Such a document has no legal standing and, therefore, is used exclusively as an aid to budgetary planning and decision making. **Resource:** Hartman, W.T. (1988). *School District Budgeting.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

IV.A INFRASTRUCTURE – MAINTENANCE

52	**Are existing facilities adequate for instructional and support service program requirements?** Facilities and grounds must be planned, constructed, and maintained in a manner that supports effective instructional and support services. Facilities planning and maintenance must ensure adequacy, safety, cleanliness, and efficiency. **Resource:** Swartzendruber, A. (1996) "Planning and Constructing School Facilities." *School Business Affairs.* 62, 2:4-10.
53	**Is there a plan in place for the replacement of major equipment?** The plan for equipment replacement can be integrated into the capital facilities plan if the replacement involves a major piece of equipment like a building heating or cooling unit. Most school facilities, however, contain equipment items valued at less than $5,000 and many of these items have a life-expectancy of less than 10 years. Replacement of these items must often be included in the annual operating budget. Therefore, school districts should have a general plan of intended replacement and related cost estimates for the next three to five years. A simple spreadsheet application can organize this information. **Resources:** Association of School Business Officials. (1995). *School Facilities Maintenance and Operations.* Reston, VA: Author. Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management.* 2nd Ed. Reston, VA: ASBO International. 18-36.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
54	**Does the district have a preventive maintenance plan for facilities and equipment?** A preventive maintenance plan, including a preventive maintenance schedule, is highly desirable for major items of equipment. Preventive maintenance should be undertaken on a planned basis and in line with the builder's or manufacturer's specifications. Such maintenance includes routine repairs and replacement of parts on buildings, grounds, and equipment, but does not involve major structural or space alterations or major repairs. **Resources:** Association of School Business Officials. (1995). *School Facilities Maintenance and Operations.* Reston, VA: Author. Kaiser, D. (1989). *The Facilities Manager's Reference.* Boston, MA: R. S. Means Company, Inc.
55	**Are preventive maintenance records adequately maintained and up-to-date?** Records of maintenance activities must be maintained in order to establish a "history" for each major piece of equipment or structure. This information is vital when it comes to making decisions about rebuilding or replacement. A staff member should be assigned to monitor the maintenance of these records. **Resource:** Megan, R. (1996). "How to Set Up a Plant Maintenance Program.". *Safety + Health* 153, 4: 52-56.
56	**Is there an explicit district policy concerning community use of school facilities?** In many school districts the school facilities, especially auditoriums, gymnasiums, and playing fields, are in demand for use by various community groups. While any prudent school administrator might want to comply with all requests that do not interfere with school activities to curry favor with the public, problems arise. Questions related to community use of school facilities include: Will all community groups be granted equal access to school facilities? On what grounds can a community group be denied permission to use school facilities? Who covers the added maintenance expenses resulting from this extracurricular use of facilities? **Resource:** Neville, W.A. (1996). "Schools of the Future—Expanding Roles of Schools." *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 65-67.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	IV.B INFRASTRUCTURE – IMPROVEMENT
57	**Are instructional and support staff involved in the planning for facility renovation and new construction?**

Key users must be involved in planning for renovations or new facilities. Neither instructional nor support staff should be left out of the process.

Questions related to involvement in facility planning include: Does the school district regularly seek suggestions from school instructional and support staff ? Are there ways other than formal and informal meetings for staff to provide input?

Resource:

Swartzendruber, A. (1996). "Planning and Constructing School Facilities." *School Business Affairs* 62, 2: 4-10.

58	**Is there an adequate process for receiving suggestions about infrastructure improvement from the community?**

Just as staff need to be consulted, an array of community-based stakeholders should also be consulted about infrastructure improvements. This consultation can generate many important ideas and help build community support for infrastructure improvement. Effective administrators implement ways to obtain feedback from the community on a regular basis.

Questions related to receiving suggestions about infrastructure improvement from the community include: Does the district's newsletter solicit input? Does the district's annual census contain open-ended questions or solicit comments?

Resource:

Swartzendruber, A. (1996). "Planning and Constructing School Facilities.".*School Business Affairs* 62, 2: 4-10.

	IV.C INFRASTRUCTURE – DEVELOPMENT
59	**Is there a long-range facilities plan and capital construction program?**

For most school districts, the long-range facilities plan is embodied in periodic capital construction projects as they are conceived. Therefore, there is no conscious effort to project long-range physical needs on a continuous basis. Effective school administrators, however, know the importance of systematically maintaining a multi-year plan or program that identifies probable capital needs (plant and equipment) and potential sources of funding. This effort must be integrated with the school district's strategic planning process.

Questions related to a long-range facilities plan and capital construction program include: Does the district have a plan for remodeling, renovation, and new construction?

Resources:

Hack, W.G., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1998). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach.* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Swartzendruber, A. (1996). "Planning and Constructing School Facilities." *School Business Affairs* 62, 2: 4-10.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	V.A RISK AND LIABILITY – MAINTENANCE
60	**Is the emergency management plan current, available, and well known?**

An emergency management plan needs to consider any emergency condition that potentially disrupts normal school activities and requires action such as evacuation to maintain student and staff safety.

Questions related to a district emergency plan include: Will you be able to act quickly and effectively in an emergency? What would you do if you received a bomb threat or received advance notice of a tornado? Does the district have a plan for preparing for, coping with, and recovering from a disaster? How will you mobilize your staff? How will you ease the stress on your staff and students?

Resources:

Goens, G.A. (1996). "Anatomy of a Crisis: Report From the Front Line." *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 47-51.

Levitt, A.M. (1997). *Disaster Planning and Recovery: A Guide for Facility Professionals.* John Wiley & Sons.

61	**Is there a specific program for staff training on the implementation of emergency management plans?**

A plan for dealing with emergencies is of little use in an actual emergency unless all staff involved in the various aspects of the plan have been fully briefed and prepared for its implementation. This training should be conducted periodically and evaluated.

Questions related to a specific program for staff training on the implementation of emergency management plans include: Have you "test driven" your emergency plan through a simulated crisis? Is the plan and training schedule distributed to all staff? Will the plan be readily available during an actual emergency? Have you identified key people who will "keep their cool" during an emergency?

Resources:

Butler, J.G., and P. Badura. (1997). *Contingency Planning and Disaster Recovery: Protecting Your Organization's Resources.* Computer Technology Research Corporation. (Note: this citation deals extensively with protecting your computerized records and databases during a crisis.)

Educational Service District 105, Yakima, WA. (1997). *Quick Response: A Step-by-Step Guide to Crisis Management for Principals, Counselors, and Teachers.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
62	**Are there specific plans and procedures for dealing with toxic substances, HAZMAT, and the Right to Know?**

School districts and individual schools must be prepared to ensure student and staff safety with regards to hazardous materials.

Questions related to protecting staff and students from these materials include: Do you know what toxic substances are found in the school district buildings? Are local emergency personnel aware of what toxic substances are present? Have you conducted the legally required Right To Know training and are you in compliance with all SOSHA and OSHA legal requirements? Do you routinely request the toxic data sheets from manufacturers when purchasing hazardous materials? Are all potentially toxic substances stored properly? Are procedures outlined in the case of a child swallowing a toxic substance?

Resources:

Cote, R.P., and P.G. Wells, ed. (1991). *Controlling Chemical Hazards: Fundamentals of the Management of Toxic Chemicals.* Chicago: Unwin Hyman.

DiNardo, C. (1996). "Environmental Hazards: What You Need To Know?" *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 22-26.

Freedburg, L. (1983). *America's Poisoned Playgrounds: Children and Toxic Chemicals.* Washington, DC: Center for Policy Alternatives.

63	**Does the district have policies and procedures for involving external agencies (fire, police, and social services) in school incidents?**

Coordination with external agencies is critical to the proper handling of emergency incidents.

Questions related to coordination with external agencies include: Do you have written guidelines for when to involve the police and fire departments in an incident? Who determines the need for their involvement? Who makes the call? How do you handle suspected child abuse, either physical or sexual? Who makes the call to the appropriate social service agency?

Resources:

Carl, A. (1993). *Child Abuse: What You Can Do About It, Teachers Edition.* New York: College Press Publishing Company, Inc..

Check, W.A., and C.E. Irwin, ed. (1989). *Child Abuse: Psychological Disorders and Their Treatment.* Chelsea House Publishing.

Faller, K.C. (1989). *Child Sexual Abuse: An Interdisciplinary Manual for Diagnosis, Case Management, and Treatment.* New York: Columbia University Press.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
64	**Are insurance policies current and adequate?** Decisions about purchasing adequate insurance are never easy because costs must be weighed against risk and exposure. Brokers and legal advisors can assist but decisions are ultimately up to the policy body. Questions related to insurance coverage include: How do you minimize risk and reduce insurance costs? Are all your insurance policies in force now? When did you last review your coverage? What coverage are you lacking? Do you use an independent consultant to review your coverage? Do you have an "umbrella" policy for catastrophic loss? Who is fidelity bonded? Do you bid out your insurance coverage? **Resources:** Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance.* New York: Prentice Hall Press, Inc. Vaughan, E.J., T.M. Vaughan, and T. Vaughan. (1995). *Essentials of Insurance: A Risk Management Perspective.* Chicago: John Wiley & Sons.
65	**Are periodic safety inspections conducted on a timely basis and appropriately recorded? Are student and staff accident reports compiled and evaluated?** Data from periodic safety inspections and student and staff accident reports must be compiled, evaluated, and acted on so that risk can be minimized for everyone involved in schools. Questions related to periodic safety inspections and student and staff accident reports include: Does your insurance company conduct a risk management and safety inspection of your school district's buildings and grounds? Have you hired a private consultant to conduct a safety/risk management inspection? Do you correct any noted deficiencies? How are student and staff accident reports handled? **Resources:** Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance.* New York: Prentice Hall Press, Inc. Louvar, J.F. (1997). *Health and Environment Risk Management: Fundamentals with Applications.* New York: Prentice Hall Press. Mawdley, R. (1996). "Students and Buses: What You Need To Watch Out For." *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 39-43.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	V.B RISK AND LIABILITY – IMPROVEMENT
66	**Is staff training in risk management and safety provided?**

School districts are never at a loss for areas requiring staff training. Training priorities must be developed because available time and resources are restricted. Every district must assign a priority to training in risk management and safety.

Questions related to risk management training include: When was the last time you conducted such training? Was it effective? Have you noticed a reduction in the number of incidents reported? Are the instructional and support staff members aware of the issues of negligence and liability?

Resources:

Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, Inc.

Russo, D. and D. Freicks. (1996). "Negligence: What You Need to Know to Avoid Liability." *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 25-29.

67 **Is input solicited from instructional and support staff about risk management?**

Broad-based input into risk management plans is needed to ensure that the district is prepared for as many situations as possible.

Questions related to soliciting staff input include: Do you ask your staff, either formally or informally, for input regarding any potential health- or safety-related issues? After you receive incident reports, do you follow up with the staff involved and ask how a future incident can be avoided?

Resources:

Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, Inc.

Russo, D. and D. Freicks. (1996). "Negligence: What You Need to Know to Avoid Liability." *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 25-29.

68 **Does the district have an effective means of ensuring that individual and community concerns are heard?**

Members of the community can be an excellent source of observations about school safety.

Questions related to community input include: Do you ask members of your educational community if they have concerns about any health or safety issues? Is the PTA involved in this issue?

Resources:

Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, Inc.

Russo, D. and D. Freicks. (1996). "Negligence: What You Need to Know to Avoid Liability." *School Business Affairs*. 62, 11: 10-13.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	V.C RISK AND LIABILITY – DEVELOPMENT
69	**Has self-insurance been considered and is it adequately financed?**

Many large school systems recognize that because of district size, risk has already been spread, and thus adopting self-insurance might save money. For districts that decide to go with self-insurance, typically a self-insurance fund is established. Small annual appropriations are made into the fund, the accumulated reserve is invested, and earned interest is added to the reserve. As the accumulated reserve increases through adding the annual appropriation and interest, the system phases out policies held in commercial companies.

Questions related to self-insurance include: Has the district identified areas of opportunity for self-insurance? Has the district explored the possibility of joining with other school districts in a self-insuring cooperative?

Resources:

Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, Inc.

Hack, W. G., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1998). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach*. 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 328-329.

70	**Have risk management concerns been incorporated into capital project planning?**

New capital projects introduce risk management issues for schools administrators.

Questions related to incorporating risk managment into capital project planning include: If you have recently had a building project, have you incorporated this new facility into your insurance coverage? Has the new building undergone a safety inspection? Has the new building or remodeling project incorporated the most innovative safety features?

Resource:

Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, Inc.

71	**Does the district have a capacity for projecting future risk exposure?**

As with many management concerns, projecting future risk exposure may be a useful way to anticipate and eliminate potential problems.

Questions related to projecting future risk exposure include: During the conduct of a safety or risk audit, have you asked about how changes in student demographics or the environment of the local community would affect your risk management program?

Resource:

Dorfman, M.S. (1997). *Introduction to Risk Management and Insurance*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, Inc.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	VI.A TECHNOLOGY – MAINTENANCE
72	**Does the district have a technology plan that addresses administrative and instructional concerns?**

Technology innovations are having a very substantial effect on instructional and administrative activities in school districts. The difficulty is keeping current and finding the resources to support new technology and the training that accompanies it. The development of a technology plan for the school district serves as a good starting point for ensuring that appropriate technology is available and used.

Questions related to whether your district techonology plan addresses adminsistrative and instructional concerns include: Does the plan cover all grade levels and subjects areas? All administrative functions?

Resources:

Rennie, R.J. (February 1996). "Information Technology's Role in Educational Organizations." School Business Affairs 62, 2: 44-47.

Weiss, A.M. (February 1996). "System 2000: If You Build It, Can You Manage It?" *Phi Delta Kappan* 77, 6: 408-419.

Sample district technology plans are available at AASA's web site (www.aasa.org).

73	**Is there a plan and adequate budget for instructional support staff training in technology applications and issues?**

All technology plans need to consider instructional staff training in the effective use of available technology. Without such training, instructional opportunities will be lost and technology investment will not achieve its full potential. This training plan must include specific plans for evaluation of effectiveness of technology in the classroom.

Resources:

Converge (www.convergemag.com)

Sample district technology plans are available at AASA's web site (www.aasa.org).

74	**Are there district policies and procedures for the use of the Internet and e-mail?**

Along with new technology has come access to the Internet and e-mail. Both offer important contributions to educational programming but also pose special challenges related to potential inappropriate use.

Questions related to Internet and e-mail policies include: Is there a specified policy concerning use of the Internet and e-mail that has board approval? Has the district clearly defined inappropriate use of each?

Resource:

Mehlinger, H.D. (1996). "School Reform in the Information Age." *Phi Delta Kappan* 77, 6: 400-407.

Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	VI.B TECHNOLOGY – IMPROVEMENT
75	**Is there staff and community involvement in the use of technology and technology improvement?**

In most communities, substantial numbers of citizens have extensive knowledge about technology applications. This expertise can often be tapped into without incurring much expense. It is important and cost-effective to do so and to involve instructional and support staff who will often be the end-users of the technology.

Questions related to staff and community involvement in technology use and improvement include: How does the district solicit involvement? Is there a relationship between the distirct and local industry, particularly computer-related firms?

Resource:

Mehlinger, H.D. (1996). "School Reform in the Information Age." *Phi Delta Kappan 77*, 6: 400-407.

76	**Is there a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of technology in the classroom?**

New technology provides the potential for access to very valuable resources and applications that can contribute to the educational mission. One of the major difficulties is keeping abreast of developments given the speed of change in the field. New resources, such as the Learning Network (www.nytimes.com/learning/index.html), seem to come online daily.

Questions related to evaluation of technology effectiveness in the classroom include: Does the school district have someone charged with keeping current on developments and bringing change to the attention of instructional leaders? Is there a well-defined process for evaluating the appropriateness of new technology before its implementation? After?

Resource:

Morton, C. (1996). "The Modern Land of Laputa: Where Computers Are Used in Education." *Phi Delta Kappan 77*, 6: 416-423.

	VI.C TECHNOLOGY – DEVELOPMENT
77	**Has the district considered the application of online and distance learning technologies?**

Keeping current in an ever-changing field like technology is an extremely difficult task. Changes out-pace the ability of most school districts in terms of staff and fiscal resources. Applications in the areas of distance learning and curriculum development pose opportunities and challenges school administrators must evaluate. In addition, applications related to a wide range of management activities merit consideration.

Resource:

Johnson, D. R. (1997). "Technology Trends." *School Business Affairs* 63, 2: 18-21.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	VII.A COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION – MAINTENANCE
78	**Are there current policies and plans for the use of communications systems (phone, fax, other)?** Telephones, faxes, and regular mail pose challenges to school districts due to the potential for inappropriate use. Questions related to these methods of communication include: Has the school district clearly identified which uses of such communications are considered inappropriate uses of school district resources? Is there a way to monitor use to ensure conformance with policy? **Resource:** Clemmer, E. F. (1991). *The School Policy Handbook.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
79	**Are there policies and plans for the use of internal and external communication instruments (i.e. newsletters)?** Most school districts issue periodic forms of communications, usually newsletters or printed media, to parents and citizens. It is important that a plan for such communications, containing specific deadlines and proposed content, be drafted before each school year. The district plan for communications should also detail policies concerning interaction between the district and the news media, as well as the general public. The plan must also consider the use of new forms of communications, including the World Wide Web. Questions related to policies and plans for the use of interanl and external communication instruments include: Does the district review its newsletter before it is mailed? Does the district have a professionally trained public relations person on staff or a consultant on retainer? **Resources:** Gallagher, D. R. (1997). *The School and Community Relations.* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. Kindred, L.W. (1985). *The School and Community Relations.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Lober, I.M. (1993). *Promoting Your School: A Public Relations Handbook.* Lancaster, UK: Technomic Publishing Co. Ordovensky, P. and G. Marx. (1993) *Working with the News Media.* Arlington, VA: AASA.
80	**Are communication links adequately maintained with related educational partners, such as other districts, social services agencies, and the local business community?** While many links with external educational partners are informal, it is important that there be official recognition of some explicit formal links. Such communication links are important for resource sharing of all kinds.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	Questions related to communication links with educational partners include: Does the district have procedures/policies for maintaining these links? Who in the district is responsible for communicating with other educational partners?
	Resources:
	Jasso, G. (1996). *Finding Corporate Resources: Maximizing School/Business Partnerships.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Cowin Press.
	Wanat, C. L. and D. Bowles. (1993). "School-Community Relations: A Process Paradigm." *Journal of Education Public Relations* 15, 1: 4-9.
81	**Does the district maintain an adequate decision-support information system?**
	Decision-support information systems or management information systems are intended to provide current and past information on planning, control, and operational concerns. A number of questions in this self-review have dealt with components of a good MIS, such as enrollment projections. It is important that information be maintained by the school district in an organized manner so it is readily available to support decision making.
	Resources:
	Hack, W.I., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1995). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 70-77.
	Wood, R.C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management.* 2nd ed. Reston, VA: ASBO International.
82	**Are student databases maintained?**
	Educational laws require school districts to maintain permanent records on all school-age children in a district. At the same time, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act guarantees the privacy of student records. In many cases schools establish a student records access officer who is responsible for these records.
	Questions related to student databases include: Does the district have a policy in use and access to databases? How are the records safeguarded?
	Resource:
	Norton, S.M., D.L. Webb, L.L. Dlugosh, and W. Sybouts. (1996). *The School Superintendency.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
83	**Is there effective dissemination of enrollment forecasting data to instructional and support staff?**

The development of enrollment forecasts was discussed in Question #6. The concern in this item is the appropriate dissemination of this crucial information.

Questions related to enrollment forecast data dissemination include: Are key administrative staff informed? Instructional staff? What vehicles are used for dissemination? Is this information reviewed as part of the preparatory/budgeting process for a new school year?

Resource:

Hack, W.I., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1995). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 81-84.

VII.B COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION – IMPROVEMENT

84	**Does the district include instructional and support staff in the planning and development of MIS?**

Many aspects of MIS planning and development cannot occur without the active engagement of instructional and support staff. Without such involvement, collected information is more likely to be unrealistic and less likely to be used.

Questions related to involving staff in MIS planning and development include: How are users' needs addressed?

Resource:

Wood, R.C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management.* 2nd ed. Reston, VA: ASBO International.

VII.C COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION – DEVELOPMENT

85	**Are new MIS technologies being considered?**

Concepts such as data warehousing and data mining are affecting the field of information management. For now, only the largest school districts are likely to have the resources or the need to invest in such sophisticated informational technologies, but technologies are rapidly changing and applications deemed unimaginable a few years ago are commonplace today. Therefore, it is important that school administrators keep abreast of developments in informational technology.

Questions related to considering new MIS technologies include: Who is exploring these new technologies? How is the district implementing these technologies?

Resources:

Kelly, S. (1997). *Data Warehousing in Action.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Wood, R.C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management.* 2nd ed. Reston, VA: ASBO International.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
86	**Is there an established process for developing future community profiles, including demographic projections, that make full use of available community resources?**

A community profile that includes information on family characteristics, community economic activity, and community preferences is vital to informing the decision-making process. A demographic plan should include items such as: changes in student characteristics, in and out migration shifts, changes in the local economy, and planned residential construction.

Questions related to future community profiles include: How are these factors analyzed and how do they affect district enrollments and educational program plans?

Resources:

Dembowski, F.L. and S. Van Hoesen. (1997). "Predicting 21st Century School Enrollment: Assumptions, Tools and Tips." *School Business Affairs* 63, 4:11-15.

Wood, R.C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*. 2nd ed. Reston, VA: ASBO International.

VIII.A PURCHASING – MAINTENANCE

87	**Is purchasing standardized?**

There are two types of purchasing standardization school districts should consider. First is standardization on a specific brand name or vendor for a specific item. The usual candidates for standardization are large equipment items such as buses or computers, which require frequent maintenance. Standardizing on a product or vendor can increase efficiency by allowing for volume discounts, reduction of parts inventory, and specialized maintenance agreements.

The second form of standardization is the development of a standard supply list. This can be developed by compiling a list of the items requisitioned over the past few years. Having such a list reduces the time required by requisitioners, allows for increased accuracy of specifications, and shortens order processing time.

Questions related to standardized purchasing include: Is the district using both types of standardization?

Resources:

Candoli, C. I., W.G. Hack, J.R. Ray, and D.H. Stoller. (1984). *School Business Administration*, 3rd ed. Newton, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Inc.

Wood, R. C., Thompson, D. C., Picus, L., O., and Tharpe, D. I., (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed., Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials, , Section 20-15.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
88	**Are purchasing policies published and available to all potential vendors and staff?** Publishing all purchasing policies and procedures reduces employee questions regarding the purchasing process, thus promoting efficiencies. Making this information available to vendors is equally important to increase both the quality and quantity of bids received. In product specifications "boiler plate" it should be noted that it is the responsibility of the vendor to comply with all applicable regulations and procedures with regard to purchasing and the school district. Questions related to the availability of purchasing policies include: Does the district have a published purchasing policy? How is it distributed to those who request a copy of it? **Resources:** Candoli, C. I., W.G. Hack, J.R. Ray, and D.H. Stoller. (1984). *School Business Administration*, 3rd ed. Newton, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Inc. Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, O.L. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed.. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.
89	**Does the district have a system of internal controls for the acquisition process?** Numerous internal control procedures can be used to promote efficiency and effectiveness in a district's purchasing operation. Questions related to internal acquisition process controls include: Are all requisitions and purchase orders (POs) signed? Are requisitions and POs numbered? Has the use of emergency POs been reduced? Has an "open purchase order" system been established? Is there a follow-up on outstanding POs? Are all POs encumbered? Are billing invoices checked against POs and shipping invoices? Is one person in charge of purchasing? **Resource:** The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department. (1995). *Purchasing: A School Business Management Handbook*. Albany, NY: Author.
90	**Does the storage/warehousing and distribution operation provide supplies and equipment adequately and in a timely fashion to support instructional and administrative activity?** Have you looked in your teachers' closets lately? The amount of supply and equipment items stored there will astound you. Many studies have shown that centralized warehousing and distribution are cost effective. Questions related to materials storage and distribution include: Are supplies being stored in a central location (central warehouse)? Is the distribution system to the buildings efficient and timely (are you using your courier system)? Have you coordinated supply distribution with your building principals? **Resource:** Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	VIII.B PURCHASING – IMPROVEMENT
91	**Is there a method for identifying purchasing problems, including timeliness of acquisition?**

Districts are notorious for slow payments. Many smaller vendors cannot handle the cash flow problems this causes, and do not bid on your items.

Question related to methods for identifying purchasing problems include: Have you examined the level of satisfaction with your purchasing operation with your internal and external users? Are vendors happy with how your district treats them. (If they are unhappy, they will not bid on your requests.) Are they paid in a timely fashion? Are your internal customers, your teachers and staff, happy with the purchasing process? Have you asked them? Are they getting what they need to conduct their business? Are they getting items when they need them? Have you considered forming a committee of teachers, staff, and vendors to examine this issue?

Resource:

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

92	**Is there staff involvement in purchasing (i.e. development of specifications)?**

Getting supplies and equipment that do not meet the end users' needs is useless. Good specifications will alleviate this problem. The best approach is to get users involved in the development of these specifications. Ask teachers and support staff what works best for them. Get them involved in product quality testing. Question them about usage problems. Once satisfactory products have been identified, place them on the standardized supply list.

Questions related to staff involvement in purchasing include: How is staff input solicited? Is it acted upon?

Resources:

The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department. (1995). *Purchasing: A School Business Management Handbook*. Albany, N.Y: Author.

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	VIII.C PURCHASING – DEVELOPMENT
93	**Have cooperative purchasing agreements been considered?**

Establishing cooperative purchasing arrangements promotes efficiencies in a number of ways. Better specifications can be developed. Volume discounts may be obtained. Ordering costs will be reduced. Cooperative purchasing works best with high-cost or volume items such as paper, fuel, food, buses, and other equipment.

Questions related to cooperative purchasing agreements include: Are there existing arrangements between other local districts and governmental agencies you could take part in?

Resource:

Association of School Business Officials. (1979). *Cooperative Purchasing Guidelines*. Reston, VA: Author.

94 **Has a cooperative agreement for warehousing and distribution been considered?**

The establishment of a central warehouse and distribution center is initially expensive and many districts feel that they cannot afford the staff to conduct these activities. It is still possible to consider establishing warehousing arrangements with a few neighboring districts, especially if you have entered into cooperative purchasing arrangements. The use of a central warehouse and distribution center allows for cost-saving procedures such as economic order quantity systems, volume discounts, and product quality testing, and reduces product deterioration, obsolescence, waste, and theft.

Questions related to warehousing and distribution agreements include: Are there exisiting arrangements you could take part in?

Resource:

Association of School Business Officials. (1979). *Cooperative Purchasing Guidelines*. Reston, VA: Author.

95 **Is there a process for evaluating and purchasing instructional and administrative innovations?**

The number of new products and services arriving in the marketplace everyday is staggering.

Questions related to policies for evaluating and purchasing instructional and administrative innovations include: How is your district keeping pace with these innovations? How are they being evaluated? How is staff input on these items being solicited? How is the use of new products in the district being evaluated? Is there a plan for supply and equipment replacement? Who is responsible for this process?

Resources:

The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department. (1995). *Purchasing: A School Business Management Handbook*. Albany, N.Y.: Author.

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	IX.A COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICES – MAINTENANCE
96	**Are students receiving the services appropriate and necessary for their needs?**

Districts must provide appropriate counseling and health services for students. Many sutdies show that appropriate counseling and health services facilitate the learning process. Clearly, if a student has certain health problems or is in mental distress, learning is impaired.

Questions related to providing students with needed services include: Does your district have a sufficient number of elementary, middle school, and high school counselors? Is there a K-12 guidance plan? Are there enough school psychologists to handle the number of requests for educational evaluations and to keep current with mandates for special education students reviews? Is there a school nurse in each building? Is there a school physician on call?

Resources:

Gysbers, N. and P. Henderson. (1994). *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program*. 2nd ed. Alexandra, VA: American Counseling Association Publication.

Rye, D.R. and R. Sparks. (1991). *Strengthening K-12 School Counseling Programs. A Support System Approach*. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development Inc. Publishers.

Wisconsin State Legislative Council. (1994). *School Health Services in Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: Author.

97	**Are students' rights being protected in the delivery of counseling/health services?**

The district has an obligation to ensure that students' rights are protected in the provision of both counseling and health services.

Questions related to protecting student's rights include: Is the district in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)? Are proper notification procedures used when evaluating students for special services? Is the district in compliance with state laws that apply to special education students?

Resources:

Fischer, L. and G.P. Sorenson. (1996). *School Law for Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers*. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers.

Morrissey, J.M. (1997). *Rights and Responsibilities of Young People in New York*. Albany, NY: New York State Bar Association.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
98	**Does the district have a plan for dealing with the outbreak of infectious and contagious diseases and student-borne pathogens such as head lice?** Occasionally, there will be an outbreak of the measles, chicken pox, head lice, or other contagious illnesses; also, there may be individual cases of other serious diseases. Questions related to dealing with infectious and contagious diseases and student-borne pathogens such as head lice include: Does the district have a plan and procedure in place for dealing with such occurrences? Are the school nurses current with the proper procedures to use? Under what conditions is the local or state health department to be notified? **Resources:** Benensen, A.S. (1981). *Control of Communicable Diseases in Man.* Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. New York State Department of Health and New York State Education Department. (1986). *Recommendations for the Control of Select Communicable Diseases in School Settings.* Albany, NY: Authors.
	IX.B COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICES – IMPROVEMENT
99	**Are consumer surveys used to gauge performance?** Customer feedback is important to the evaluation and improvement of counseling/health services. Questions related to gauging performance include: Are any surveys used to determine how satisfied students, parents, and other school personnel are with counseling and health services? How often and in what manner are such surveys administered? **Resources:** Benensen, A.S. (1981). *Control of Communicable Diseases in Man.* Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. New York State Department of Health and New York State Education Department. (1986). *Recommendations for the Control of Select Communicable Diseases in School Settings.* Albany, NY: Authors.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

IX.C COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICES – DEVELOPMENT

100 **Are those involved in counseling/health services keeping current with innovations (procedural and technological)?**

As in other areas of school management and operation, it is important to keep abreast of innovations related to the delivery of counseling and health services.

Questions related to whether those involved in counseling/health services are keeping current with innovations include: Are counseling services addressing the changing needs of students in the district? Is the district using current technology for keeping records in both the health offices and the counseling offices? Has the counseling staff been trained in the use of new computer programs for college searching and career exploration?

Resources:

Casey, J.A. (1992). *Counseling Using Technology with At-Risk Youth.* Ann Arbor, MI: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. 347 480)

North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction. (1995). *On Our Way to Becoming: School Counseling in North Carolina.* Raleigh, NC: Author.

X.A TRANSPORTATION – MAINTENANCE

101 **Is the transportation program conducive to safe operation and timely transportation of students?**

Considering the large number of students transported to school in the United States everyday, the incidences of school bus accidents and tragedy are rather small. School buses are generally considered safe vehicles. However, providing a safe transportation program within public schools is complex. With increasing state and federal statutes, as well as increasing requirements to serve a multitude of special populations, school administrators and business officials must have an effective and efficient safety program in place. Many facets make up a sound safety program, from the safety of children walking to and from school, to children riding the bus, to students being driven or driving to school, to bus safety education for students. School districts and administrators must keep a keen eye on their transportation safety programs.

Resources:

Fowler, D.F. (1997). "Keeping School Buses Safe." *School Business Affairs* 63, 2: 44-47.

Mawdsley, R. D. (1996) "Pupil Transportation and the Law." *Monograph of the National Organization on Legal Problems of Education.*

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (1993). *School Bus Safety Report.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
102	**Does the school district have a current replacement plan for the school bus fleet?**

A school bus replacement plan is influenced by a number of considerations, but the safety of passengers is paramount. While many federal and state guidelines establish standards for the construction of buses and for the operational safety requirements of buses, the school district must look at the purchasing of a bus from a number of different perspectives. Considerations include the age and size of the bus fleet, the number of students requiring transportation and the distance traveled, the road conditions in the community, the availability and use of fuel, and the number of school buildings being served and the schedules of these buildings. The development of the replacement plan might include a cost-benefit analysis or a lease-purchase analysis to determine whether to buy new buses, lease, or recondition the existing fleet.

Resources:

Drake, L., and H. Roe. (1994). "Transportation Services." In *School Business Management: Supporting Instructional Effectiveness*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Hirano, S. (1996). "Efficient Bus Replacement Requires Proper Cost Analysis." *School Bus Fleet* 49.

103	**Does the school district have an effective bus routing and scheduling plan?**

One of the more time-consuming duties of the transportation office is scheduling and route planning. These key roles, if not conducted properly, can waste school resources. Many variables affect the development of a good route plan. One key to developing such a plan is parsing this function into its planning and operational stages. In the planning stages, planners need to consider variables such as road conditions, length of segments, turnaround time, number of runs, road quality, and seasonal weather conditions. In the operational phase of the route plan, the plan is implemented and managers analyze the daily problems of running the transportation office, such as maintaining the fleet, managing office resources (i.e., fuel, personnel, time, etc.), and coordinating with outside organizations.

Resources:

Candoli, I. C., W.G. Hack, and J.R. Ray. (1995). "Auxiliary Services." In *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Hennessey, J. (1990). "Computerized Bus Routing for 'Controlled Choice' School Attendance Policies." *School Business Affairs* 36.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
104	**Are the internal controls in transportation maintenance activities adequate to minimize losses?**

Many internal controls affect the development of an effective and efficient maintenance program, including regular inspections and preventive maintenance along with good record keeping. Other internal controls that contribute to the smooth operation of the maintenance program include waste reduction and recycling programs as well and internal and external anti-theft mechanisms. Inspections should be conducted on a daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis and should reinforce or support the preventive maintenance schedules developed for each vehicle. Data from these inspections should be maintained in a well-established record-keeping system.

Resources:

Harper, W. A. (1997). "Keys To Building a Model Transportation Program." *School Bus Fleet*, 28-32.

Wilcox, E. (1996). Sifting Through Waste Reduction Options Can Save Time, Money. *School Bus Fleet* 33-36.

105	**Does the district have a preventive maintenance program for the bus fleet?**

In maintaining an efficient and effective transportation shop, managers and supervisors must keep a keen eye on costs. The trick is to lower costs while still maintaining an excellent performance record, which means preventive maintenance. An excellent preventive maintenance program can save the transportation office a significant amount of money. However, there is more to preventive maintenance then just routine maintenance on the vehicles. Keeping an eye on the overall preventive maintenance program requires looking into all aspects of the operation. It involves everything from simplifying procedures, to standardizing parts, to proper record keeping, to keeping an eye on such things as daily fuel consumption. As the tasks become more complicated, the need for adequate documentation becomes more apparent. Today's buses, and the technology in them, continually calls for well-trained mechanics and managers with the skills to keep the fleet running.

Resources:

Editorial staff. "Preventative Maintenance Saves Money, Aids Safety" (June 1991). *School Bus Fleet*, 58.

Editorial staff. "Taking a Closer Look At Maintenance Costs". (October 1997) *School Bus Fleet*, 29-33.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

X.B TRANSPORTATION – IMPROVEMENT

106 **Has the district considered using a geographic information system for its transportation planning?**

Computers are becoming more commonplace in school bus facilities as transportation managers and administrators across the country seek ways to streamline work loads and reduce costs. Geographic information systems can serve as useful methods of data visualization and aid in laying out and adjusting bus routes to conform to the location of students and the most efficient use of fleet resources. They are becoming more affordable and "user friendly."

Resources:

Hirano, S. (July 1997). "Is Your Shop Wired For Success?" *School.Bus Fleet* 33-35.

Salmon, S.H. (July 1991)."The Potential of Computerized Pupil Transportation: How To Evaluate Systems & Their Benefits". *School Business Affairs* 20-24.

107 **Is the instructional staff involved in the resolution of transportation-related student problems?**

The role of the public school teacher often extends to include support to transportation. This support is given by providing in-class instruction, monitoring the loading and unloading of students at school, and sometimes riding on the buses as monitors. Administrators, transportation managers, instructional staff, and drivers need to interact to identify the ways that transportation influences the curriculum and instruction processes. Policy coming from this collaborative process should outline the length of bus routes, bus schedules, student discipline and behavior on the bus, as well as the distances students not taking the bus would be required to walk. To control student discipline, districts should develop student codes of conduct while riding and provide in-class instruction about proper behavior on buses. To help enforce policy, some districts have even installed cameras to monitor activities or have had teachers ride the bus. Counseling and training have also been provided to bus drivers to help them deal with unmanageable students.

Resources:

Drake, T.L. and W.H. Roe. (1994). "Transportation Services." *School Business Management: Supporting Instructional Effectiveness.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 174-176.

George, K. (February 1995). "Fuss On the Bus." *The American School Board Journal* 33-37.

108 **Have cooperative arrangements for bus maintenance and fleet replacement been considered?**

School boards in communities across the country are continually faced with the rising cost of providing services to school children. One way to help trim costs is to join a cooperative transportation maintenance agreement. In such programs, organizations with similar needs for materials and services pool their resources. There are many advantages and disadvantages school boards and transportation managers must weigh before entering into such agreements.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	Questions related to cooperative arrangements for bus maintenance and fleet replacement include: Are the district's programs adequate? Cost-effective? Are there existing local cooperative arrangements the district can participate in?
	Resource:
	Bushweller, K. (October 1997). "21st Century Garage: School Bus Maintenance Enters The Computerized World." *The American School Board Journal* 37-39.
	Rasicot, J. (October 1996). 'The High Cost of Transportation.' *The American School Board Journal* 46-52.
109	**Has consideration been given to alternative methods of providing transportation services, such as contractual agreements with private vendors or regional or cooperative agreements?**
	Tight budgets are prompting many public agencies to consider competitive contracting with for-profit companies to provide support services to school districts. To make the decision-making process flow smoothly, school administrators must weigh their options carefully and conduct cost-benefit analyses. Crucial to this process when it comes to transportation is outlining costs associated with the initial cost of purchasing buses and calculating depreciation schedules of the fleet, including fixed costs and variable costs such as fuel. Combined, these actions help provide a true picture about whether it is beneficial to contract for services, to join a cooperative agreement, or to continue to go it alone.
	Resources:
	Drake, T.,L., and W.H. Roe. (1994). "Transportation Services." In *School Business Management: Supporting Instructional Effectiveness*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
	Beales, J.R. (1994). *Doing More With Less: Competitive Contracting for School Support Services* (Policy Study No. 179). Los Angeles, CA: Reason Foundation.
	X.C TRANSPORTATION – DEVELOPMENT
110	**Is there effective coordination with area transportation officials about upcoming road or transit changes?**
	Coordination and communications across governmental jurisdictions and agencies is difficult and frequently non-existent. In the field of transportation, advanced knowledge of planned road improvement and construction projects helps school transportation managers adjust bus schedules and routes with minimum disruption to operation.
	Resource:
	Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	XI.A FOOD SERVICE – MAINTENANCE
111	**Does the district have a plan for developing and retaining high participation rates in school food service programs?**

Food service programs exist and operate in public schools under federal and state laws that require them to break even financially but not incur financial surpluses. Healthy food and prompt service are key ingredients to any successful food service program. Certain pitfalls such as loud and chaotic environments, small selection and variety, and poor food quality as a result of trimming costs all contribute to the lack of participation in the food school service program. Addressing these issues helps increase participation, as does not running out of food, having self-serve items, and streamlining the money-collection process.

Resources:

Merril, D. (1997). "The New Dietary Guidelines and Kids: Will They Sit At the Same Table?". *School Business Affairs* 63, 3: 22-26.

Rednok, J. (1987)." Building High Participation in School Food Service." *School Business Affairs* 53, 4: 24-28.

112	**Are there adequate internal controls in the food service operation to minimize loss?**

One of the challenges food service operations face is providing quality, nutritious food students want to eat while meeting regulatory guidelines and minimizing waste. The waste reduction operation is broken into two categories: waste generation and waste disposal. The former deals with providing and creating meals for students. Ways to cut down on this include creative menu planning, offer vs. serve, and the inclusion of salad and soup bars that offer an alternative choice to the students. The latter deals with the disposal of the waste generated. The three R's play a key role here: reducing the amount of waste generated, reusing materials in the generation process, and recycling materials that result from food generation.

Resources:

Food and Nutrition Service. (1990). *Meal Pattern Requirements and Offer versus Serve Manual.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Ghiselli, R.F. (1993). "Reusing, Reducing, and Recycling Solid Waste in Indiana School Food Service." Doctoral Dissertation, Purdue University. *Dissertation Abstracts International.* 54, 2646.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
113	**Are adequate and timely food safety inspections conducted?**

The development of any successful food service operation requires the implementation of an effective food safety program. Such a program is two-faceted. The first facet deals with the way food service providers prepare and deliver food to students. Food safety inspections encourage the proper and safe operation of the program by focusing on such things as sanitation techniques, hot and cold food preparation and presentation, and food storage. The second facet deals with how food service and safety is integrated into the curriculum and classroom instruction. This component involves promoting an understanding of major nutrition concepts and concerns in the classroom and developing a food safety curriculum that coincides with the health, science, and home economics curricula.

Resources:

California State Department of Education. (1990). *Food Sanitation and Safety Self-Review Instrument for Child Care Centers*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction, Bureau for Food and Nutrition Services. (1992). *Sanitation and Safety for School Food Service*. Madison, WI: Author.

114	**Is there a financial plan and budget for the provision of food service? Is it self-supporting?**

The financial management of public school food service operations requires skill in the areas of budgeting, purchasing and pricing, cost accounting, inventory control, and forecasting. All school lunch or food service programs must operate on a cost recovery basis. This means that they operate as a business or enterprise activity. An annual financial plan and budget can be a powerful tool for achieving this objective. To help develop an effective financial plan, food service managers must focus on productivity, cost controls, and the bottom line.

Resources:

Boehrer, J.M. (1993). "Managing to Meet the Bottom Line." *School Business Affairs* 58, 3: 3-8.

Caton, J. (October 1991). "Handling the Heat." *The American School Board Journal* 29-30.

XI.B FOOD SERVICE – IMPROVEMENT

115	**Is the food service staff involved in the instructional process?**

A primary goal of the food service program is to help students learn about food nutrition, safety, and other related health issues. This effort requires the food service staff to work closely with instructional staff to develop a food safety and nutrition curriculum, much of which can be integrated into existing programs in the science and health departments. Classroom and cafeteria instruction reinforce one another. The curriculum should include flexible guidelines that ensure that teachers address requirements outlined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. All food service resources should be available to help teachers and food service staff successfully implement the curriculum goals.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	Resources:
	Food and Drug Administration. (1998). *USDA/FDA Education Initiative: Evaluating the Placement of Food Safety Education in American Schools.* Washington, DC: Author.
	New York State Education Department, Bureau of Health and Drug Education and Services. (1989). *Nutrition Comes Alive: Food Service Worker Guide.* Albany, NY: Author.
116	**Are consumer surveys used to gauge performance?**
	Consumer surveys can provide valuable information about food service operations. Determining who should be surveyed and how often is key to successful survey use. Some combination of student and parent response is desirable on a regular basis. Simply tracking food service participation rates and monitoring disposal of waste food can pick up certain clues about performance by students, but is not enough to make worthwhile improvements.
	Resources:
	Kavulla, T. A. (1983). "Marketing School Food Services." *School Business Affairs* 48, 3: 24, 38.
	Van Egmond-Pannel, D. (1987). *The Food Service Handbook: A Guide for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International.
117	**Has consideration been given to the development of a school breakfast program?**
	In 1966, The School Breakfast Program began as a pilot. It was permanently adopted in 1975 for school districts and organizations qualifying for the National School Lunch Program who desired such a program. Under this program, states are provided assistance for non-profit meal programs operating in schools or other residential child care facilities so that meals can be offered at a free or reduced price to students who cannot afford them. The program is designed to provide all students with a healthy, nutritious start to the school day, thus increasing their chances of being successful in school. Because eating a proper breakfast has been shown to help children perform better on tests, focus in the classroom, and generally improve their attitudes toward school, all districts should consider participating in such a program.
	Resources:
	New York State Education Department. (1992). *Break the Fast: A Guide For School Breakfast Programs.* Albany, NY: Author.
	US Department of Agriculture. (1998). *Time For School Breakfast.* Washington, DC: Author.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
118	**Has consideration been given to alternative methods of providing food service, such as privatization or regional cooperative agreements?**

In an attempt to promote efficiency and cost minimization, boards of education are turning to contractual services for the delivery of auxiliary services like food service. As a result, for-profit, private companies are increasingly providing services to school districts. One alternative to contracting is joining a cooperative agreement with other districts with the same need for similar materials or services. Cooperative agreements have many advantages, including increased merchandise quality and substantial savings. However, some disadvantages exist, including distribution problems, increased paperwork, and the logistics of coordinating with other cooperating agencies to agree on the types of products to be purchased. But these obstacles can be alleviated if addressed up front.

Resources:

Reason Foundation. (January 1996). *Using Contractors to Cook, Clean, and Drive the Bus.* (Policy Study No. 221). Los Angeles, CA: Author.

Reason Foundation. (November 1993). *Making Schools Work: Contracting Options For Better Management* . (Policy Study No. 169). Los Angeles, CA: Author.

XI.C FOOD SERVICE – DEVELOPMENT

119	**Are instructional and support staff involved in planning for future needs?**

Feedback from instructional and support staff about food service operations can be useful. It is important that such feedback be encouraged, and that action be taken on feasible suggestions. The link between food service and health education is the most obvious avenue of feedback on the instructional side of the education equation. Equally necessary is feedback from lunchroom monitors and food service staff.

Resources:

Van Egmond-Pannel, D. (1987). *The Food Service Handbook: A Guide for School Administrators.* Reston, VA: ASBO International

120	**Has consideration been given to innovations in the delivery of food service operations?**

As food service managers and school administrators search for ways to streamline costs, they are turning to technological innovations. From barcoded identification for students to high-tech point-of-sale systems, computers have become a mainstay in public education and are playing a key role in food service operations. Administrators should continually seek ways to upgrade existing technology to streamline the operations.

On the other side of the counter, there is a movement toward making public school cafeterias more like restaurants and treating students more like customers. In the future, cafeterias will have booths and tables, lit menu-boards, outdoor access to courtyards, and food courts similar to those found in malls today. All of this is an attempt to make the cafeteria, a focal point of many schools, a friendly and more conducive learning environment for the students.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

Resources:

Harrington-Lueker, D. (March 1992). "From Cafeteria To Café." *Executive Educator* 39-40.

Pellegrino, T. (1990). "Computers in School Food Service." *School Business Affairs* 56, 3: 22-24.

XII.A OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – MAINTENANCE

121 **Are school facilities and grounds being maintained in a manner fully conducive and supportive of the educational mission?**

Many research studies have shown that physical aspects of the school environment affect student achievement.

Questions related to facilities and grounds maintenance include: Are classrooms too hot or too cold? Is the humidity set at an appropriate level? Are there drafts? Is the lighting sufficient? Are workspaces appropriate for the instruction being conducted? Are the instructional spaces well maintained and clean? Is all equipment operational and safe? Would you like to sit in the classroom spaces for six hours per day?

Resources:

Chan, T.C. (1996). "Environmental Impact on Student Learning." (ERIC, ED406722).

Earthman, G.I. (1995). "A Statewide Study of Student Achievement and Behavior and School Building Condition." (ERIC, ED387878).

Jones, R.A. (1995). *The Child-School Interface: Environment and Behavior.* New York: Canell Press.

122 **Are facilities and grounds maintained in a manner that reflects the highest level of concern about safety and the well-being of students and staff?**

Parents should not have to worry about the physical well being of their children while they are in school. However, we still read about tragic incidences such as part of a roof falling on a child's head, or a wall collapsing in a heavy wind, which are preventable.

Questions related to facilities and grounds safety include: Have you had a structural engineer conduct an inspection of your facilities? Are you in compliance with all fire regulations and building codes? Have you had a safety inspection conducted by your insurance agent?

Resources:

Berner, M.M . (1993). "Building Conditions, Parental Involvement, and Student Achievement." *Urban-Education* 28, 1: 6-29.

Foster-Harrison, E.S. and H.A. Peel. (1997). "Parents Speak Out: What Should Schools & Classrooms Look Like?" *School In the Middle* 7, 1: 42-47.

New York Associations for School Superintendents of Buildings and Grounds. (1994). *Maintenance Procedures Manual for Maintenance Supervisors and Head Custodians.* Valhalla, NY: Author.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
123	**Are open-ended purchase orders being used for the acquisition of operations and maintenance supplies?**

There are many occasions when maintenance persons need an "emergency" item to complete a rush job and go to the local hardware store for it with cash or a credit card. When this happens frequently, problems can arise. Accounting control is lost because receipts get lost, purchasing regulations are violated, and it is hard to ensure that what is being bought is for the school district. An open-purchase order system allows the staff to go to a local vendor and get what they need. Districts establish open purchase orders with vendors for a specified period of time for a specified amount, listing who is able to purchase against the order. The invoice for each purchase is then sent to the accounting department, and at the end of the month the vendor sends the district invoice itemizing all purchases made. The accounting department can then compare the invoice with the receipts. This process ensures control over the purchasing process.

Resources:

The University of the State of New York, the State Education Department. (1995). *Purchasing: A School Business Management Handbook*. Albany, New York: Authors.

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

124	**Are there adequate internal controls to minimize losses related to operations and maintenance?**

Internal controls are an integral component in a cost-effective managment operations and maintenance process.

Questions related to internal controls that minimize loss include: Is the fixed asset inventory current? Is there a tool crib and supply storage area? Is it supervised and does it include an inventory control system? Are supplies and materials used on each job listed on the work order and cross-checked with the inventory? Is there a way to know whether district equipment is being used for personal jobs at night and weekends? Are materials being discarded because of obsolescence or poor handling/storage?

Resources:

Hack, W. G., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1998). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Magee, G.H. (1988). *Facilities Maintenance Management*. New York: Robert S. Means Co.

Sack, T.C. (1971). *A Complete Guide to Building and Plant Maintenance*, 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
125	**Is there a plan for preventive maintenance of facilities and equipment?**

Preventive maintenance for machines, systems, and structures is an integral component of keeping schools and school systems running smoothly and cost-effectively. It is clearly better to prevent a problem than to have an equipment failure disrupt the educational process or endanger the well being of students and staff.

Questions related to preventive maintenance of facilities and equipment include: Are all electric motors routinely serviced? Are service requirements for equipment being met? Is there a preventive maintenance schedule for facilities and equipment? Are preventive maintenance costs built into the budget?

Resources:

Chanter, B. and P. Swallow. (1996). *Building Maintenance Management*. Chicago: Blackwell Science Inc.

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

XII.B OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – IMPROVEMENT

126	**Are staff members involved in the improvement process for operations and maintenance?**

School districts often overlook staff members' ideas when considering how to improve operations and maintenance. To do so is to miss out on an opportunity to capitalize on the views of those often closest to the items and systems being targeted for improvement.

Questions related to involving staff members in the improvement process for operations and maintenance include: Is the staff consulted regarding operations and maintenance needs during the budgeting process? Are they involved in the inspection process? Does the supervisor listen to their advice and complaints? Do you have a suggestion box? Do you reward staff for good ideas?

Resource:

Illinois Association of School Boards. (1984). *The New Good School Maintenance: A Manual of Programs and Procedures for Buildings, Grounds, Equipment*, Springfield, IL: Author.

127	**Are consumer surveys used to gauge performance?**

Students, instructional staff, and parents are the customers of the maintenance and operations department.

Questions related to consumer surveys include: Do the district's surveys ask if students and teachers are pleased with the condition of their classrooms? Do you act on their complaints? Are you proactive in the conduct of inspections regarding operations and maintenance performance?

Resources:

Berner, M.M. (1993). "Building Conditions, Parental Involvement, and Student Achievement." *Urban-Education* 28, 1: 6-29.

Foster-Harrison, E.S., and H.A. Peel. (1997). "Parents Speak Out: What Should Schools & Classrooms Look Like?" *School In the Middle* 7, 1: 42-47.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
128	**Has consideration been given to alternative methods for the delivery of maintenance and operations services?**

Many districts are now considering alternatives to district-owned and -run maintenance and operations services as a way to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Questions related to alternative methods for the delivery of maintenance and operations services include: Have you considered contracting out specialized maintenance or operations procedures? privatizing your maintenance and operations functions? Are you involved in cooperative relationships for the delivery of maintenance services with local school districts or governmental agencies?

Resources:

Counsel, D. (1996). "Privatizing Maintenance". *School Business Affairs*. 62, 2: 16-19.

Wood, R. C., D.C. Thompson, L.O. Picus, and D.I. Tharpe. (1995). *Principles of School Business Management*, 2nd ed. Reston, VA: Association of School Business Officials.

XII.C OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – DEVELOPMENT

129	**Are new technologies such as energy-efficient HVAC equipment and longer lasting floor waxes being given adequate consideration? Does your new construction employ these latest technologies?**

New and innovative equipment and techniques are being introduced everyday. These advances can save districts time and money as well as improve operations.

Questions related to these advances include: Is someone in your district keeping track of these advances and evaluating them for possible use in the district? Are the new cost- and energy-saving opportunities being evaluated for replacement of existing items? When new construction or remodeling is conducted in the district, are new technologies being integrated? Have you looked outside the educational arena to see what companies in the private sector are doing with these types of innovations? Have you considered engaging a consultant about this?

Resource:

Trent, C.C., and W.C. Trent. (1996). "Breathing Easier: HVAC Specifications for Schools." *School Business Affairs* 62, 2: 20-23.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources

XII.A SECURITY SERVICES – MAINTENANCE

130 **Has the district made adequate provision for the security of students, staff, and property?**

Unfortunately, concerns about students, staff, and facilities safety have increased in recent years in many school districts. Highly publicized incidents have required districts to evaluate their own risk level, and control the movement of children and adults in school settings. Typical security activities include the following: routine patrols during nonschool hours and vacations, campus monitoring conducted during the school day, monitoring of various metal detectors, investigative activities to resolve security issues and other crime-related concerns, on-going systems for monitoring drug and substance abuse concerns, and school/police liaison activities.

Questions related to the security include: Does the district conduct all of the activities listed above?

Resource:

Hack, W. G., I.C. Candoli, and J.R. Ray. (1998). *School Business Administration: A Planning Approach.* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 362-365.

SECURITY SERVICES – IMPROVEMENT

131 **Has the district considered installing security technologies, such as metal detectors or security alarm systems?**

A variety of technologies ranging from burglar alarms tied to law enforcement offices to motion detectors to electronic surveillance devices are available. New applications in security appear on a regular basis. When considering the acquisition of such new technology, the school administrator needs to first consider the need. Buying security technology prior to knowing exactly what is needed to supplement other security measures can be a costly exercise in gadgetry.

Questions related to installing security technologies, such as metal detectors or security alarm systems, include: Does the district employ these technologies? Is there a need for them?

Resource:

Drake, T. L. and W.H. Roe. (1994). *School Business Management: Supporting Instructional Effectiveness.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 269.

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Question Number	Questions/Explanations/Resources
	XII.C SECURITY SERVICES – DEVELOPMENT
132	**Has the district considered privatization or cooperative agreements for the provision of security services?**

As with other services considered in this self-review instrument, when it comes to security, contractual agreements with private security services or cooperative arrangements with other school districts or governmental units might prove less expensive and more manageable than in-house service delivery.

Questions related to the privatization or cooperative agreements for security services include: Has the district explored the services of local security firms? Are there cooperative agreements in place in other districts that the district might be able to take part in?

Resource:

Gilbert, C. B. (1996). "How to Keep Your Schools Safe and Secure." *School Business Affairs* 62, 11: 5-9.

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CHAPTER 5

Final Thoughts

A dedicated administrator is committed to finding ways to improve the performance of service delivery in all activities supporting the instructional mission. This essentially means that the search is for:

Support Service Delivery that is

Better
Cheaper
Faster
Smarter

The ESDMRI does not provide all the answers to the complex issues involved in school district management, but it does establish a structure for reviewing what is currently being done and for making self-inquiry into how to do it better. Improvements in management performance will provide better service to support the basic educational mission and possibly free up resources for reinvestment in the instructional program.

Unless an administrator is involved in a very exceptional school management setting, some areas of weakness should be expected to surface during the self-review process using the ESDMRI. With the revelation of potential weaknesses comes an interest in effecting change and moving toward best practice. Organizational change processes are never simple due to the complexity of organizations and operational conditions.

The review process and change strategy outlined in Chapter 3 is based on organizational change strategies drawn from Connor and Lake (1994). The actual course of change in an organizational setting may ultimately involve a combination of tactics including negotiation, compromise, and bargaining. The comprehensive change strategy also involves a range of approaches: facilitation, information sharing, political maneuvering, and even some influencing of attitudes. All of these strategies and tactics are well known to experienced administrators.

Key Points Summarized

1. School administrative roles can be separated into *leader* and *manager* roles. Typically, greater status and emphasis is given to the leader roles, which involve providing educational vision and serving as a professional role model. Manager roles involve providing supervision to a variety of administrative support activities, which are less understood and valued by the typical educational administrator. The manager roles, however, are essential to the success of all school systems.

2. Key to the success of any school district is a shared understanding of and *emphasis on basic mission*. The basic mission of an educational organization is to provide high-quality instruction. Managerial support activities only make sense if they support this basic instructional mission.

3. Administrators should view managerial functions as a sequential and reiterative process involving *planning*, *controlling*, and *evaluating*.

4. School management can be separated into various *management sub-systems* that represent basic support activities.

5. All school administrators must engage in *managerial scanning*, which involves looking at organizational performance from four perspectives – *societal*, *organizational*, *departmental*, and *individual*. Involving representatives from each of these perspectives in the management review process is imperative.

6. All managerial functions and subsystems operate concurrently in the three dimensions of: *maintenance*, *improvement*, and *development*.

7. The *self-review process is internal* to the organization *with broad-based participation* of all key stakeholders, *and is focused on reviewing the performance of basic management sub-systems* in all three dimensions of management. The ESDMRI facilitates an examination of management plans and their use, inclusiveness in administrative functions, consistency with exemplary practice and clarity of relationships.

8. The managerial review and change process involves five stages: (1) *organizing and educating*; (2) *conducting a review session*; (3) *reviewing results*; (4) *determining a change strategy*; and (5) *implementing change*.

9. Self-review is an ongoing process, not a one-time event.

■

Last Words

We hope that at least three outcomes result from this book:

- An increased emphasis on management in the administration of school districts, resulting in a better balance between the time and energy devoted to leadership and managerial roles by school administrators;
- An increase in the managerial effectiveness of school districts; and
- An increased emphasis on managerial functions in the training programs of school administrators.

There is nothing in this book to suggest that if the recommended steps are carefully and faithfully followed, no mistakes will be made. The art of management makes absolute prescription impossible. At the same time, the science of management can be aided by the systematic application of some rationally-based approaches. The Effective School District Management Review Instrument and the processes outlined here are examples of such approaches.

School administrators are continually being urged to reform, restructure, and re-engineer. The use of the ESDMRI will help school administrators identify areas of strength, which should be publicized, and potential weakness, which should be addressed. If thoughtfully followed, this review process will provide guidance for appropriate changes that result in improved school district performance and increased student achievement—the reason for it all.

One final request

School administrators using the ESDMRI are encouraged to share their results with the authors so that the instrument can be refined and to inform a more in-depth analysis of school district management practices. The authors can be reached directly by calling Fred Dembowski at 518/442-5083 or via e-mail at Fred@wizvax.net.

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About the Authors

The Effective School District Management Review Instrument, which forms the backbone of this book, comes from the observations and writing of the principal author, Frederick L. Dembowski. Dembowski has served in multiple roles in education, including experience as an elementary school teacher, adult education instructor, school administrator, professor, and higher education administrator. His experience also includes a two-year tour of duty as chief administrator for a large USAID educational development program in Somalia, Africa. He is currently chair of the Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies at the University at Albany, New York, and serves as the editor of *The AASA Professor*.

Carl D. Ekstrom assisted Dembowski in the development and writing of this book. Ekstrom has a public administration background; his career has been a combination of teaching, research, and administration in a variety of educational, governmental, and nonprofit organizations. Eckstrom is currently a management consultant in upstate New York.

APPENDIX

A *The Effective School District Management Review*

Directions:

For each of the items in the ESDMRI, the reviewer should perform three tasks:

1. Assign an individual rating by circling the appropriate number in the space provided next to each question. This rating will indicate one of four possible conditions:

   0 = Do not have or not applicable
   1 = Weak area
   2 = Adequately functioning
   3 = Exemplary performance

2. Identify who within the organization bears primary responsibility for the conduct of that item, and write the name of that person in the space provided, and

3. Undertake initial consideration of the priority for action of each item. Your thoughts will be helpful in the review process discussion and should be noted in the record for later use.

For a detailed discussion about conducting a review process using this instrument, see Chapter 3. For a detailed description, sample discussion questions, and additional resource materials to review for each item in the ESDMRI, see Chapter 4.

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
	I.A OPERATING POLICY/GOVERNANCE – MAINTENANCE		
1	**How appropriate is the district mission statement?**	**0 1 2 3**	
2	**Are board policies appropriate, written, and up-to-date?**	**0 1 2 3**	
3	**Are administrative rules and regulations published, readily available, and up-to-date? Are they congruent with district policies?**	**0 1 2 3**	
4	**Are administrative procedures established and consistent with district policies and regulations (i.e. registration, curriculum development)? Are these procedures organized and accessible?**	**0 1 2 3**	
5	**Are the master schedule and master calendar current and in place?**	**0 1 2 3**	
6	**Does the district systematically engage in enrollment forecasting on a regular basis?**	**0 1 2 3**	
7	**Is an annual program planning process in place?**	**0 1 2 3**	
8	**Is the method used to deliver instruction approriate for the organizational structure?**	**0 1 2 3**	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
9	**Does instructional program articulation exist across all grades, K-12?**	0 1 2 3	
10	**Are professional development activities provided for school board members?**	0 1 2 3	
11	**Does the district have a plan for school closings due to weather conditions and other emergencies? Does the plan include a current phone tree and other methods for disseminating closing information?**	0 1 2 3	
12	**Are organizational structures and relationships clearly defined and accurate?**	0 1 2 3	
	I.B OPERATING POLICY/GOVERNANCE – IMPROVEMENT		
13	**Are any new policies, procedures, and regulations in the germination stage that might be advanced by this review process?**	0 1 2 3	
14	**Is there a continuous improvement process (program) in place in the district?**	0 1 2 3	
15	**Are instructional and support staff members actively engaged in policy development and governance activities?**	0 1 2 3	
16	**To what extent is risk-taking behavior fostered in the district?**	0 1 2 3	

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Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
17	**To what extent are team-building, group process, delegation, and shared decision-making encouraged and rewarded?**	0 1 2 3	
18	**Does the district strategic planning process produce results that are translated into policy and procedures? Is there a formal monitoring process to track this action?**	0 1 2 3	
	I.C OPERATING POLICY/GOVERNANCE – DEVELOPMENT		
19	**Does the district have a 5- to 10-year, even 20-year, planning process that identifies and analyzes potential demographic change?**	0 1 2 3	
20	**To what extent are existing organizational structures able to accommodate future instructional programming?**	0 1 2 3	
21	**Does the district's planning process include methods for policy development and evaluation of policy suggestions or initiatives?**	0 1 2 3	
	II.A HUMAN RESOURCES – MAINTENANCE		
22	**Does the district have recruitment policies and procedures for instructional and support personnel?**	0 1 2 3	
23	**Does the district have policies and procedures in place for staff retention and turn-over management?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
24	**Are all human resource policies, procedures, and plans current, including job descriptions?**	0 1 2 3	
25	**To what extent are existing human resource policies in compliance with federal and state regulations?**	0 1 2 3	
26	**Does the district have specific staff professional development plans? Are staff development activities evaluated?**	0 1 2 3	
27	**Are personnel records maintained and up-to-date? Do they include documentation of tenure, seniority, training, and certification?**	0 1 2 3	
28	**Are fringe benefits reviewed to ensure that the best possible options for the employee and the district are offered?**	0 1 2 3	
29	**Are grievance policies appropriate, documented, and effective?**	0 1 2 3	
30	**Are periodic labor-management meetings held, and are the results recorded and communicated?**	0 1 2 3	
31	**Are additional assignments to staff adequately documented and clearly communicated?**	0 1 2 3	

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Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
32	**Is an individual performance evaluation (summative and formative) regularly conducted on all personnel and are the results appropriately documented and communicated?**	0 1 2 3	
33	**Does the district maintain and monitor a staff absenteeism management system?**	0 1 2 3	
34	**Are tenure decisions given careful consideration using well-documented information and evaluations?**	0 1 2 3	
	II.B HUMAN RESOURCES – IMPROVEMENT		
35	**Is an annual review of human resource needs conducted?**	0 1 2 3	
36	**Has the district considered developing a flexible fringe benefit plan?**	0 1 2 3	
37	**Is there full staff commitment to and involvement in personnel evaluation?**	0 1 2 3	
	II.C HUMAN RESOURCES – DEVELOPMENT		
38	**Does the district actively engage in analysis and planning for future labor agreements? Does this include a consideration of long-term collective bargaining strategies?**	0 1 2 3	

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Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
39	**Does the district have a 5- to 10-year retirement projection and staffing needs analysis?**	0 1 2 3	
	III.A FINANCING – MAINTENANCE		
40	**Does the district have well-articulated annual operating budgeting processes and procedures?**	0 1 2 3	
41	**Does the district use line item or program budget allocations, together with encumbrance accounting, to control spending?**	0 1 2 3	
42	**Do accounting practices conform to the requirements of GAAP and GAAFR?**	0 1 2 3	
43	**Are adequate financial internal controls established and maintained?**	0 1 2 3	
44	**Are financial reports in compliance with legal requirements?**	0 1 2 3	
45	**Are results of the annual audit available and are all suggested improvements acted upon?**	0 1 2 3	
46	**Does the district have policies and procedures that safeguard its financial assets, including investments?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
47	**Does the district prepare in advance for the annual financial audit?**	0 1 2 3	
	III.B FINANCING – IMPROVEMENT		
48	**Is there a plan to increase community and instructional and support staff involvement in the budget development process?**	0 1 2 3	
	III.C FINANCING – DEVELOPMENT		
49	**Is a method in place for reviewing the likely changes in local, state, and federal financing policy that will affect district financing?**	0 1 2 3	
50	**Has the district considered developing a system of full costing?**	0 1 2 3	
51	**Has the district considered developing multi-year operating budget projections?**	0 1 2 3	
	IV.A INFRASTRUCTURE – MAINTENANCE		
52	**Are existing facilities adequate for instructional and support service program requirements?**	0 1 2 3	
53	**Is there a plan in place for the replacement of major equipment?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
54	**Does the district have a preventive maintenance plan for facilities and equipment?**	0 1 2 3	
55	**Are preventive maintenance records adequately maintained and up-to-date?**	0 1 2 3	
56	**Is there an explicit district policy concerning community use of school facilities?**	0 1 2 3	
	IV.B INFRASTRUCTURE – IMPROVEMENT		
57	**Are instructional and support staff involved in the planning for facility renovation and new construction?**	0 1 2 3	
58	**Is there an adequate process for receiving suggestions about infrastructure improvement from the community?**	0 1 2 3	
	IV.C INFRASTRUCTURE – DEVELOPMENT		
59	**Is there a long-range facilities plan and capital construction program?**	0 1 2 3	

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Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
	V.A RISK AND LIABILITY – MAINTENANCE		
60	**Is the emergency management plan current, available, and well known?**	0 1 2 3	
61	**Is there a specific program for staff training on the implementation of emergency management plans?**	0 1 2 3	
62	**Are there specific plans and procedures for dealing with toxic substances, HAZMAT, and the Right to Know?**	0 1 2 3	
63	**Does the district have policies and procedures for involving external agencies (fire, police, and social services) in school incidents?**	0 1 2 3	
64	**Are insurance policies current and adequate?**	0 1 2 3	
65	**Are periodic safety inspections conducted on a timely basis and appropriately recorded? Are student and staff accident reports compiled and evaluated?**	0 1 2 3	
	V.B RISK AND LIABILITY – IMPROVEMENT		
66	**Is staff training in risk management and safety provided?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
67	**Is input solicited from instructional and support staff about risk management?**	0 1 2 3	
68	**Does the district have an effective means of ensuring that individual and community concerns are heard?**	0 1 2 3	
	V.C RISK AND LIABILITY – DEVELOPMENT		
69	**Has self-insurance been considered and is it adequately financed?**	0 1 2 3	
70	**Have risk management concerns been incorporated into capital project planning?**	0 1 2 3	
71	**Does the district have a capacity for projecting future risk exposure?**	0 1 2 3	
	VI.A TECHNOLOGY – MAINTENANCE		
72	**Does the district have a technology plan that addresses administrative and instructional concerns?**	0 1 2 3	
73	**Is there a plan and adequate budget for instructional support staff training in technology applications and issues?**	0 1 2 3	
74	**Are there district policies and procedures for the use of the Internet and e-mail?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
	VI.B TECHNOLOGY – IMPROVEMENT		
75	**Is there staff and community involvement in the use of technology and technology improvement?**	**0 1 2 3**	
76	**Is there a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of technology in the classroom?**	**0 1 2 3**	
	VI.C TECHNOLOGY – DEVELOPMENT		
77	**Has the district considered the application of online and distance learning technologies?**	**0 1 2 3**	
	VII.A COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION – MAINTENANCE		
78	**Are there current policies and plans for the use of communications systems (phone, fax, other)?**	**0 1 2 3**	
79	**Are there policies and plans for the use of internal and external communication instruments (i.e. newsletters)?**	**0 1 2 3**	
80	**Are communication links adequately maintained with related educational partners, such as other districts, social services agencies, and the local business community?**	**0 1 2 3**	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
81	**Does the district maintain an adequate decision-support information system?**	0 1 2 3	
82	**Are student databases maintained?**	0 1 2 3	
83	**Is there effective dissemination of enrollment forecasting data to instructional and support staff?**	0 1 2 3	
	VII.B COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION – IMPROVEMENT		
84	**Does the district include instructional and support staff in the planning and development of MIS?**	0 1 2 3	
	VII.C COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION – DEVELOPMENT		
85	**Are new MIS technologies being considered?**	0 1 2 3	
86	**Is there an established process for developing future community profiles, including demographic projections, that make full use of available community resources?**	0 1 2 3	
	VIII.A PURCHASING – MAINTENANCE		
87	**Is purchasing standardized?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
88	**Are purchasing policies published and available to all potential vendors and staff?**	0 1 2 3	
89	**Does the district have a system of internal controls for the acquisition process?**	0 1 2 3	
90	**Does the storage/warehousing and distribution operation provide supplies and equipment adequately and in a timely fashion to support instructional and administrative activity?**	0 1 2 3	
	VIII.B PURCHASING – IMPROVEMENT		
91	**Is there a method for identifying purchasing problems, including timeliness of acquisition?**	0 1 2 3	
92	**Is there staff involvement in purchasing (i.e. development of specifications)?**	0 1 2 3	
	VIII.C PURCHASING – DEVELOPMENT		
93	**Have cooperative purchasing agreements been considered?**	0 1 2 3	
94	**Has a cooperative agreement for warehousing and distribution been considered?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
95	**Is there a process for evaluating and purchasing instructional and administrative innovations?**	0 1 2 3	
	IX.A COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICE – MAINTENANCE		
96	**Are students receiving the services appropriate and necessary for their needs?**	0 1 2 3	
97	**Are students' rights being protected in the delivery of counseling/health services?**	0 1 2 3	
98	**Does the district have a plan for dealing with the outbreak of infectious and contagious diseases and student-borne pathogens such as head lice?**	0 1 2 3	
	IX.B COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICES – IMPROVEMENT		
99	**Are consumer surveys used to gauge performance?**	0 1 2 3	
	IX.C COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICES – DEVELOPMENT		
100	**Are those involved in counseling/health services keeping current with innovations (procedural and technological)?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
	X.A TRANSPORTATION – MAINTENANCE		
101	**Is the transportation program conducive to safe operation and timely transportation of students?**	0 1 2 3	
102	**Does the school district have a current replacement plan for the school bus fleet?**	0 1 2 3	
103	**Does the school district have an effective bus routing and scheduling plan?**	0 1 2 3	
104	**Are the internal controls in transportation maintenance activities adequate to minimize losses?**	0 1 2 3	
105	**Does the district have a preventive maintenance program for the bus fleet?**	0 1 2 3	
	X.B TRANSPORTATION – IMPROVEMENT		
106	**Has the district considered using a geographic information system for its transportation planning?**	0 1 2 3	
107	**Is the instructional staff involved in the resolution of transportation-related student problems?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
108	**Have cooperative arrangements for bus maintenance and fleet replacement been considered?**	0 1 2 3	
109	**Has consideration been given to alternative methods of providing transportation services, such as contractual agreements with private vendors or regional or cooperative agreements?**	0 1 2 3	
	X.C TRANSPORTATION – DEVELOPMENT		
110	**Is there effective coordination with area transportation officials about upcoming road or transit changes?**	0 1 2 3	
	XI.A FOOD SERVICE – MAINTENANCE		
111	**Does the district have a plan for developing and retaining high participation rates in school food service programs?**	0 1 2 3	
112	**Are there adequate internal controls in the food service operation to minimize loss?**	0 1 2 3	
113	**Are adequate and timely food safety inspections conducted?**	0 1 2 3	
114	**Is there a financial plan and budget for the provision of food service? Is it self-supporting?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
	XI.B FOOD SERVICE – IMPROVEMENT		
115	**Is the food service staff involved in the instructional process?**	0 1 2 3	
116	**Are consumer surveys used to gauge performance?**	0 1 2 3	
117	**Has consideration been given to the development of a school breakfast program?**	0 1 2 3	
118	**Has consideration been given to alternative methods of providing food service, such as privatization or regional cooperative agreements?**	0 1 2 3	
	XI.C FOOD SERVICE – DEVELOPMENT		
119	**Are instructional and support staff involved in planning for future needs?**	0 1 2 3	
120	**Has consideration been given to innovations in the delivery of food service operations?**	0 1 2 3	
	XII.A OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – MAINTENANCE		
121	**Are school facilities and grounds being maintained in a manner fully conducive and supportive of the educational mission?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
122	**Are facilities and grounds maintained in a manner that reflects the highest level of concern about safety and the well-being of students and staff?**	0 1 2 3	
123	**Are open-ended purchase orders being used for the acquisition of operations and maintenance supplies?**	0 1 2 3	
124	**Are there adequate internal controls to minimize losses related to operations and maintenance?**	0 1 2 3	
125	**Is there a plan for preventive maintenance of facilities and equipment?**	0 1 2 3	
	XII.B OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – IMPROVEMENT		
126	**Are staff members involved in the improvement process for operations and maintenance?**	0 1 2 3	
127	**Are consumer surveys used to gauge performance?**	0 1 2 3	
128	**Has consideration been given to alternative methods for the delivery of maintenance and operations services?**	0 1 2 3	

Question Number	Question/Explanation	Rating 0=Do not have, NA 1=Weak area 2=Adequately functioning 3=Exemplary	Who is Responsible?
	XII.C OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – DEVELOPMENT		
129	**Are new technologies such as energy-efficient HVAC equipment and longer lasting floor waxes being given adequate consideration? Does your new construction employ these latest technologies?**	**0 1 2 3**	
	XII.A SECURITY SERVICES – MAINTENANCE		
130	**Has the district made adequate provision for the security of students, staff, and property?**	**0 1 2 3**	
	XII.B SECURITY SERVICES – IMPROVEMENT		
131	**Has the district considered installing security technologies, such as metal detectors or security alarm systems?**	**0 1 2 3**	
	XII.C SECURITY SERVICES – DEVELOPMENT		
132	**Has the district considered privatization or cooperative agreements for the provision of security services?**	**0 1 2 3**	

The centerpiece of *Effective School District Management: A Self-Review Instrument and Guide* is the Effective School District Management Review Instrument (ESDMRI), a tool district teams can use to self-assess how well they are accomplishing education-related management tasks. Specifically, the ESDMRI focuses users on answering the questions "Are we conducting a particular management process?" and "Is each process being conducted to our satisfaction?" The ESDMRI allows school administrators and other stakeholders to work together to assess their strengths and needs in areas related to the management of everything from instruction to transportation to finances to crisis prevention.

Before introducing the ESDMRI, authors Fred Dembowski and Carl Ekstrom explain the difference between the leader and manager roles for school administrators and the importance of the latter. They also provide an extensive list of related resources for each item in the ESDMRI. The ESDMRI itself is included in Appendix A for easy photocopying and use by district teams interested in improving their education-related management efficiency and effectiveness—a prerequisite for high-quality education.

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